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*Fores's sporting notes
& sketches*



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FORES'S
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Fores's

FORES'S SPORTING NOTES & Sketches

A Quarterly Magazine

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WITH

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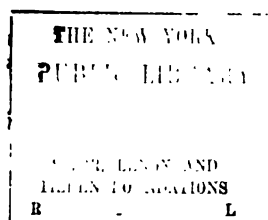
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FORES'S

SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

MELTONIANA.

By TOM MARKLAND.

IN the old 'cocking' days, with the sole exception of Sir Harry Goodricke, we had no more enthusiastic breeder or backer of birds than Mr. Goodyer, who planted the gorse just over the hill from the 'city' of Welby, which comprises two farms and three labourers' cottages. One of the farmers remarked to another that a gorse covert was rather a large order for two to supply with poultry; but the other saw his opportunity and went in for breeding cocks from which he made a good round sum, inasmuch as Mr. Goodyer would often pay an exorbitant price for a good bird for the sake of his covert's reputation, but he would not buy an inferior one at any price.

This was satisfactory to all concerned; the other farmer followed suit, and Mr. Goodyer fought many a main with the 'citizens,' while the two farmers drank many a bottle of 'black strap' at his expense. Goodyer was a very noisy man in the field, though, save on one occasion, he never risked spoiling a run by holloaing too soon. It is well known how game-cocks stray about, so much so, that to breed and rear them successfully it is necessary to have separate enclosures scattered over the farm at long distances from each other. One of the black-breasted reds had got away to this covert one morning when they happened to draw it. Just as a whimper began to cheer the hearts of the expectant throng, the executive were horrified to hear Goodyer yell out, 'Two to one on the cock!'

'Can't you be quiet, old "Yellow Breeches?"' cried a devotee, who thought Goodyer must have cockfighting on the brain.

'Two to one, I tell you ; it's old Mackley's strain !'

'What are you raving about ?' inquired another who had a little more faith in Goodyer's sanity.

'Look down there under that ash tree,' replied Goodyer. 'There is a fight on between a right bred bird and a cock pheasant.'

So there was, and a good fight too.

The ~~whimper~~ referred to had ~~nothing~~ to do with a fox, and for once the strange spectacle was seen of the Melton Hunt 'assisting' in the pigskin at a cock-fight.

Goodyer knew a great deal about cock-fighting, but he lost all the bets he made that time, for the longtail had clearly the best of the tussle, and would have killed his antagonist if he had not been frightened away by one or two hounds coming through the fence close by the scene of conflict. As it was, the black-breasted red was unable to rise for several seconds after the spectators rode up, and Goodyer exclaimed, 'I've lost ! By Jove, I couldn't have thought it !'

'You should tell the farmer to put spurs on the birds when they seem to be of a roving disposition,' said Captain Barker.

'Oh, that be d——!' replied Goodyer. 'Unless you put spurs on the pheasants as well. Fair play say I, but I wonder whether we could get up a main with cock pheasants.'

They tried it, but the birds would not fight in captivity, though, as all sportsmen know, there is no more pugnacious bird, especially when you do not kill off a proper number of them towards the close of the season.

Speaking of his noisy propensities, I remember old Tom Garner telling a story about him when out with the Belvoir one day. They had lost one fox in the 'Organ Leas,' and, on the way to draw for another, they halted in 'The Home Farm' yard and the lane adjoining to attend to the sandwiches and sherry. Croxton Park was drawing near, and somebody set the ball rolling about backing the horses—I forget their names—but the words 'I'll back' were to be heard on all sides, when in the midst of it the imperturbable Barker gravely remarked, 'I'll back Goodyer against the field. Any takers ?'

'What for ?—What at ?'

'Holloaing !'

Goodyer could take a joke as well as he could take a fence, and for a time was the best hunting man 'all round.' Writing

from memory, I believe Dicky Christian's words about him were, 'He was the mainstay of Melton. 'Dat, how he did cuff along!' and he was not by any means a light weight either. He would go the full length of his purse for anything he fancied in the way of horseflesh, and did not, as a rule, get the worst of the bargain, but he was fairly bested by a dealer on one occasion. This man had three greys, two of which were so much alike 'no mortal might one from other know,' and Jack Martin (the dealer) laid a plan which after two failures succeeded the third time in putting one of the greys into Goodyer at above twice its value.

They had a fox at Shoby Scholes that gave them a good many rasping runs past Holwell Mouth nearly up to Belvoir. This fox was a dark one—most stayers, as far as my experience goes, are either red or dark—but this particular varmint had a bit of white on his brush, so he was easily distinguishable. Martin put his greys in relays on the line the fox always took, but on the two first occasions another fox broke covert. On the third, however, Jack had it all his own way. There was the unmistakable white spot, and the wind was right, so off streamed the field with Jack on one of the greys that was so like the other. The fox hardly deviated from his usual line, and, after a fast gallop to Holwell Mouth, Jack Martin quietly transferred himself unnoticed to the old grey, and was soon pretty well up again. On they went to Clawson Thorns, through which they rattled the varmint, but the pace was telling fearfully by that time. Jack kept in Goodyer's rear, and, still unobserved, slipped on to the third grey (the counterpart of his first), and, as they covered the grazing grounds of Hose and Harby, with their formidable fences, he passed Mr. Goodyer, whose horse could hardly get along with his weight.

'Come on, sir,' cries Jack. 'We'll settle this fellow's account to-day, I think.'

'All very well,' roared Goodyer, in his gruff tones; 'but I didn't get my second horse.'

'I'm not riding *my* second—I shall have to finish on this one—he's got plenty in him yet, though. Hulloo. Here's a buster! Come up, my beauty. See you at the finish, sir, no doubt?'

'I'll give you a fiver to change mounts,' roars Goodyer.

'All right, sir,' replies Jack; 'I know you won't see me lose in case of an accident, but I value this horse at three hundred guineas.'

'All right, Jack, we'll talk about that afterwards,' and on went Goodyer to the finish, leading the whole field—what there was left of it. They, however, did not kill, for they lost their fox at Blackberry Hill; but Jack sold Goodyer the grey at his own price, and it was some time before the secret leaked out that he had not started on the one he finished with. It is not certain that Goodyer to his dying day got scent of the *ruse*, though, when he rode the grey through an extra long thing, through his second horse not being available, he must have discovered that he had either been 'bested,' or the horse had gone wonderfully off his form.

Not far from the scene of this performance, another dealer who was 'riding to sell' had a slice of luck, but quite accidentally. The man, whose name I forget, was thrown, and his horse was at large in a field where young Charley Harrison was looking after some drainers. Charley was a good horseman, and when he saw the gee-gee inwardly determined that he would have a gallop if he could catch the errant animal. He managed to get into the pigskin, and so well did he steer the mount through the remainder of the run, that he received an offer at the very handsome figure of eighty-five guineas, which, of course, he was unable to accept; but on the way back the dealer met him and opened fire in choice language, declaring that Charley had robbed him of twenty pounds that day by not returning him the horse in time for him to ride it out.

'How do you make that out?' said Charley.

'I would very likely have sold that prad for seventy guineas replied the dealer.

'Well, what are you going to give me if I sell him for more than seventy?'

'All you can make.'

Charley, we all know, was not a Croesus, and the com. was very acceptable, while the dealer was equally satisfied at the result of what, at the time, looked like a disastrous day. They discussed some—soda and milk—or soda and something else, at the 'Peacock' over the transaction, and the dealer asked Charley how he dared to ride the horse. 'It might have been Lord Forester's,' said he.

'I don't know about that,' replied Charley; 'but this I do know that, when any of the Vale boys get into the saddle, *the horse is pretty certain to go the way the hounds go.*'

'Well, if you ride them always as well as you rode that one,

I don't mind a few croppers, as long as you catch the cattle, for I know how to fall as a rule without coming to much grief.'

Though they did not kill the Shoby Scholes fox on the occasion above referred to, they rolled him over shortly afterwards when he slightly deviated from his usual line and went for Muston Gorse. He nearly reached the haven of refuge, and the huntsman saw it was 'touch and go,' for the earths were not likely to be stopped on that side of 'the border.' He viewed the fox, but the hounds did not till he cracked his whip, making a report like a pistol shot, whereupon the fox turned 'broadside on,' the hounds lifted their heads and got a view, so they coursed him to a kill on one of the fields, afterwards farmed by Tom Mansell. His brush went to Quorn, but his mask remained in the Vale, for Tom Shipman declared the Belvoir ought to have 'a bit of him,' since the Quorn were always invading our country. As far as I know, the mask of old 'Shoby Scholes' is grinning from the wall of the dining-room in the old quadrangular 'Grange' to this day.

This occurred in Lord Forester's time. Were not they a keen lot in those days! There was Dan Wilcox, who belonged to the Cottesmore, but occasionally took a turn with the Belvoir. He weighed five-and-twenty stone, and never had a second horse, so it was impossible for him to be well up; but he could not bear to go home while there was another draw to be made, and Forester thought very little of throwing hounds in by moonlight, if they had not had a hard day. Will Goodall was the same—I have seen him do it on several occasions. Late one afternoon they had lost a fox on Guy's farm at Eaton, and, considering the country, you will conclude that both Dan and that stout 'fifteen-three' grey of his ought to have had quite enough; but, when the order was given to try Ling's Gorse, the old boy was unable to tear himself away, though his quarters lay in the direction they had come from (Chadwell). A young farmer named Morris was turning to go home, and, concluding that Wilcox would do the same, said, 'We'll go together, Dan.'

'That's not the way to Ling's Gorse.'

'No, but it's the way to Wycombe and Chadwell.'

'If you haven't got twenty minutes more in you, I have; I think my grey will potter along somehow, and I'll put a bottle of port in his gruel when we get home.'

It was probably a fortunate thing they did not find at the Gorse, for Daniel was only content to go home when there was no

more hunting. As he was turning away, one of the young sparks said, 'Good-bye, old boy, I wonder you didn't want us to draw Lawn Hollow.'

'Don't you try to be facetious, young man,' replied Dan. 'You can't expect me to preserve my elegant figure without a moderate amount of exercise.'

'You've got it, Dick,' said his companion. 'Bravo, old "Moderation!"' and the cognomen stuck to Dan from that day to the time when he followed the Belvoir and Cottesmore no more.

Speaking of Lord Forester and his times calls to mind the fact that he is the most prominent figure in the engraving of the 'Melton Hunt Breakfast.' Perhaps no other hunting picture, except Mr. Ferneley's scene at Barkby vies in interest with this masterly work of Sir Francis Grant's. Doubtless, it was a labour of love for the artist himself, who, though a heavy weight, and by no means fortunate in horse-dealing transactions, was seldom far from the finish of a good thing, and at times pounded the field—the light brigade included. I believe it has been already recorded how Goodall was obliged to hand over the hounds to him at the end of a long run. His mount that day was a mare he had bought from two gipsy dealers, and one of the few bargains over which they could not have had the best of him, for, when Tom Garner appeared riding her on the Wednesday at Croxton Park, the whole field were overwhelmed with astonishment, and Mr. Grant (he was not Sir Francis then) had no difficulty in realising a very handsome figure for her.

Before leaving the artist to chat about his work, I may mention that he was considered the handsomest man that rode to the three packs in his day, and he had a select number of portraits of himself which he prized very highly; and, being so few, he was very chary of parting with one to any but a relation, or a very intimate friend. One day, long after Tom Garner had retired from his service and become a farmer, Sir Francis entered his parlour for some lunch, and there he saw one of these favourite portraits framed and hanging on the wall.

'Tom, you rascal! how did you get that portrait?' cries Mr. Grant.

'Why, sir, don't you remember the cat playing havoc in one of your drawers, when you told me to clean it out, and throw the papers away? The likeness was among those papers, sir; so I had it framed.'

'I think you are a good deal like John Pick about the salmon,

Tom. You find a cat a very convenient animal. *I* do not remember any misbehaviour on pussy's part such as you refer to, but we'll let it pass. I want to pay attention to this chine.'

He was a luxurious and expensive man, and moved in the highest circles, which was fortunate for art, as he would never otherwise have made the name or produced the works we all admire so much, and of which probably none is more widely known than the scene in the breakfast room of the Old Club. The cream of the Quornites are in that cosy apartment, the time about 10 a.m., and only one thing is wanting—the presence of the other three of the original quartette that founded the Old Club, Mr. Cholmondeley, Mr. White of Condovery, and another rider from the 'county of old houses'—all good men; but Forester is the only one that figures in our historic picture. He was a capital man at breakfast, and, doubtless, he had paid due attention to the spiced round of beef which always adorned the sideboard before he took up the position in which he is portrayed with such a thoroughly contented look on his countenance. It reminds one of the remark, 'Fate cannot harm me; I have dined.' He became Lord Forester in his turn, and wielded the Belvoir horn for seven-and-twenty years. He was a thorough sportsman, and most impatient of the presence in the field of town-bred sportsmen. Of course, times were different then, and his prejudice was to a great extent justifiable; now we get some of our best riders from large towns. Forester rode out all his time. I remember his having to be helped into his saddle many a time; but, once in it, he could go with the best, just like Parson Bullen; that is to say, he could get through any run; but of course, in his latter days, was unable to lead the field as he had many a time done when he was with 'Leicestershire Jack,' the pride of the Quorndon and Belvoir. No man ever had a better innings at hunting than Forester. He dropped into the mastership of the best pack at a most favourable period, held it for an unusual length of time, and made the most of it. The hunting spirit has run high among the Foresters from the time when they chased the wild boar in the woods of Hainault to the day when the last 'whoowhoop' rang in the old lord's ears, as a good fox yielded his brush on Waltham Wold.

Turning to another figure in our engraving, we find a man as exclusive in social life as Forester was in the field. Thomas, Earl of Wilton, was one of the last of the old school of aristo-

crats of whom Thackeray's Esmonds were a type, and Egerton Lodge, though the abode of hospitality when once you had passed the threshold, was by no means an easy place in which to get the *entrée*. It is well known that a certain master of the Quorn held the post two, if not three, seasons before he received an invitation to dine at 'Claret Lodge.' All the hunt wondered at this, for Thomas Egerton, Earl of Wilton, was simply self-debarred from the mastership by the fact that no other man could so well fill the post of social whip to a subscription pack like the Quorn. No one did more to steer the hunt through troublous times than the old earl. Sir Harry Goodricke's stay was short, otherwise I should hesitate to make the above assertion, for his services were rendered at a time of direst need, but Wilton fulfilled his function so long. By the bye, he was the last, barring the Belvoir family, to relinquish the brewing of ale, and mighty ale it was too, exactly like pale sherry in appearance; but more than one unfortunate wight has walked into the river after spending an hour or two in the servants' hall; however, the Eye in front of the house is very shallow—people drive their horses into it to save some of the trouble of washing the animals and conveyances when they get home, and a man always recovered his senses sufficiently to turn shorewards when he felt the cold water, so nobody ever came to serious harm, as far as I know.

Lord Wilton always kept a large stud of spanking good hunters. We never had a better stud at Melton, except Mr. Behrens' and, for a year or two, Lord Hopetoun's. The dealers could not swindle Wilton as they could Mr. Grant, and whenever his knowledge of horseflesh *was* at fault, or he thought it was, he had a demon of a groom in Goodwin. Jack East said he ought to be shot for spoiling business. They tried to bribe Jemmy more than once, but he always remained faithful to the earl, and reaped his reward in the shape of a cottage in which to pass his later years, added to a handsome pension.

This Earl of Wilton was the first to introduce the Turkish bath into his stables, and whether it was advantageous for conditioning hunters or otherwise, at any rate some of the 'laudatores temporis acti,' who ventilated their ideas in the *Grantham Journal* to the effect that a good gallop over Burrough Hill was better than any new-fangled notion of sweating a horse, were glad by-and-by to get the *entrée*, not only for their gee-gees, but also for themselves. The rural phrase, 'He lived all his life,' applied

to none better than Lord Wilton. He rode well ; though, considering the superiority of his cattle and more numerous stud, I think Mr. Grant surpassed him in that respect.

Speaking of him as a link between the Georgian and Victorian eras, I may recall the fact that he was the last man in the shires of any note who fought a duel. His opponent was Colonel Dickson. Of the cause I decline to speak ; but when the Colonel had fired one shot, and missed, Wilton fired his pistol in the air, which was generally taken as an admission that he was in the wrong. I forget who the seconds were, but they would not allow another interchange of shots, so there the matter ended. The great event of the year among the Melton tradesmen used to be Lord Wilton's ball, the hospitality at which was profuse, and 'Tommy' would always start the revels by leading off the first quadrille with the housekeeper, only retiring when he saw the company in full swing for what he called 'a fair burst into the small hours;' but, on the other hand, his *hauteur* asserted itself when, on the morning of his birthday, his man came up to his dressing-room to see what horses were to go to Somerby that day, and ventured to wish him 'many happy returns.' The unfortunate individual encountered such a look from the Earl as made him wish for a convenient mouse-hole to get into. These Egertons are of the 'bluest' blood in England. The Howards only go back to William Henry Howard, Chief Justice of Common Pleas in Henry III.'s reign, while the Egerton family descended from Fitz-Hugh, Knight of Malpas, who was the doughtiest warrior in the service of the Constable of Chester when the Marches were the scene of as wild warfare with the Welsh in the eleventh century as ever the Percies and Dacres waged against the hardy Scots of Eskdale and Annandale.

Lord Gardner's portrait still hangs on the walls of the Old Club, and his exploits in the field live in the memory of the few who rode with him and live to tell the tale. He is more frequently mentioned at Melton now as having ridden the 'Burrough Hill' match against Lord Cardigan. Burrough Hill and Burton Flat have been responsible for more matches than any stretch of country I know. It *suggests* a match, and in modern times it has been the arena of the 'Hunt Steeplechases' at the close of the season.

There is Sir Frederick Johnstone of Westerhall, who with his brother did more skylarking than anybody, except 'The Chicken.' I have known them take the fences from the Mellum

Pens down to Melton sooner than trot home on the road, which was only a few yards on their right, all the way. He was one of Waterford's convivial crowd. The account of their escapades has appeared too often in the press to need recounting here, but he was a wonderful man in those days for riding savage brutes like Lord Wilton's Euphrates. I believe he would have managed that one if he had had to deal with him; but the Johnstones should be good horsemen, for Sir Walter says in his 'Fair Maid of Perth':—

'Within the bounds of Annandale
The gentle Johnstones ride,
They have been there a thousand years,
A thousand more they'll bide.'

The crest of the family too suggests life in the saddle. It is a winged spur with the motto, 'Nunquam Non Paratus,' said to have originated from the lady of the house serving up a clean spur on a dish when the last bullock was killed—a hint to spur over the border and fetch more from Cumberland or Westmoreland. Another version is that one of the family was at Holyrood, and a friend, knowing that the king had an intention of seizing him with a view to execution, sent the winged spur as a hint to make his escape, a hint which he was not slow to take. Whichever way it originated, Sir Frederick was 'never unprepared' for a good thing with Belvoir, Quorn, or Cottesmore, and therefore proved himself worthy to bear the crest and motto of the old border family from which he sprang.

His brother does not appear in our picture, but he was just as good as Sir Frederick, and just as wild and harum-scarum when hounds were not running. 'Come on, Fred,' he would yell, and off they would go over everything, except a few trifles like churches and haystacks.

Of the remaining candidates for the good things of the Old Club breakfast room, though Lord Rokeby, Rowland Errington, and Lyne Stevens were all more than creditable performers, and Mr. Massey Stanley went well for his weight, the one that stands out in boldest relief is 'The Prince of the Heavies'—Mr. Little Gilmour, who, if we give full credit for the extent to which he was handicapped by his weight, surpassed either Mr. Grant or Lord Wilton. These were both large-framed, heavy men, but Gilmour could give either of them a couple of stone at least. It is true that he was always well mounted, which, as I remarked before, was not always the case with Mr. Grant. No man was

more welcome at Belvoir, except the duke's relations, than Mr. Little Gilmour, and no men were fonder of the unparalleled Scotch beef, of which the Carnegie family did so much to promote the breeding. One of the family (Lord Kinnaird) figures in our print, but he was not the famous cattle breeder, being rather more given to riding good cattle which his fine estate at Brechin in Forfar enabled him to secure. 'Gilmour was as full of spirits as a schoolboy home for the holidays. Witness the lark recorded by the 'Druid' when Captain Ross and he played 'cat and mouse' up to Oakham Pastures for a couple of hundred pounds. He was a great favourite at Melton as well as at Belvoir, and nobody worshipped him more than his stud groom, old Charley Wells, who used to swear by him and his contemporary, Sir George Wombwell. There have been a large number of excellent stud grooms at Melton, but none more trustworthy than Charley. On one occasion his master told him he would see the horses right that night, as Wells wanted to go somewhere, but on his return he went the round of the stables and found that his master had (probably on purpose) left one of the horses improperly settled for the night. Of course he put the matter right, and equally, of course, he mentioned it the next morning. Both master and man told that story off and on for the remainder of their days, and Charley, like Goodwin, found a nice armchair awaiting his old age.

In taking leave of the eleven riders who sat for their portraits in our picture, it may be remarked,—

'They'd seven from merry England hailed,
And three from o'er the borders,
While Matusevic ne'er was slack,
All rode till further orders.'

HAWKING THE MAGPIE.

By HY. J. BARKER ('*The Schoolmaster*').



MORE delightful *siesta* and attendant flight of fancy I can never hope to be indulged with again—viz., to participate (with all the smack of reality) in an old-world sport, in old-world company, and at an old-world country seat!

It came about under the following circumstances:—

I had bidden a month's good-bye to my Surrey home for some inviting trout-fishing near the Peak of Derbyshire. My appointed hostelry was a little curiously gabled and ivy-mantled inn, nestling on the banks of the Derwent at a dainty spot called Margery Holm, about three miles from Chatsworth, five from Haddon, and two from Longshaw. The house was named 'The Magpie and Trout,' and a fairly good representation of this seemingly whimsical duality was to be seen gaily swinging over the neat enamel of greensward in front of the porch.

I had finished my first day's sport, had discussed a most relishable dinner, and was now sitting in my room in a half-thoughtful, half-sleeping condition.

Over the mantel was an old moth-fretted print, and each time that I opened my eyes I found myself curiously inspecting it. My critical examination did not, I remember, appear to proceed from any volition from within, but rather from some directing influence quite extraneous to myself.

The time-worn print was inscribed, 'The Earl of Devonshire and Party Hawking the Magpie, 1664'; and there was likewise given in the lower margin the script names of the principal figures of the illustration. This key, or list of names, read as follows, and in the exact order indicated:—

BRUNTON (The Earl's Falconer; last holder of this office).	THE LADY ANNE CAVENDISH.	LORD RICH (Affianced to the Lady Anne).
THE THIRD EARL OF DEVONSHIRE.	COUNTESS OF DEVONSHIRE (Seated in carriage, watching the sport).	CAROLUS CAV. (The Earl's youngest son; delicate).
A VISITOR (From Court? or from some southern county?)	LOCAL GENTRY.	WHIPPERS, &c.

N.B.—The Locality is Margery Holm, east meadow lands. Lord Wm. Cav. is absent; Dutch War.

These elucidating names, &c., had evidently been added at some subsequent period; although, beyond a doubt, they themselves were the work of a hand long since laid in the dust.

On an old oaken bracket, at some distance to the right of the picture, was a stuffed peregrine falcon, its great glass eyes seeming to look me through and through, and to resent my intruding glances at its pinched, haggard head, and gruesome plumage; whilst, to the left of the print, a similarly

attenuated mummy of a magpie, eyeless, and exposing its stitchless seams, tottered, in a pitiaibly palsied fashion, on its supporting wires.

And so my weary eyes kept opening on the faded print and its group of old-world personages,—on the ragged hawk and its twining talons,—and on the trembling relics of little Dame Margery.

Suddenly my cigar dropped from my fingers! The needle-eyed falcon and the poor defenceless magpie seemed to flutter and leap from their perches with all the instinct and vigour of renewed animation, and the figures in the picture loomed from their catalogued places, reassumed their natural proportions, and hurried from the room, dragging me with them out of my chair!

And—whether it were a dream or not—the following is a plain statement of all that I saw and did at that merry day's falconry at Margery Holm; for I had become (it seemed) the 'Visitor from Court, or from some southern county.'

* * * * *

'Now,' sang out Brunton, the falconer, in a clear voice, sufficiently loud to catch the ears of even the remotest groups of hangers-on and assistants, 'will the Earl o' Devonshire lead this goodly company of lords and ladies, and their loyal assistants, to start the magpies at Margery Holm?' Saying which, the falconer gave a loud and stirring blast on his horn, set spurs into his pony's flanks, and galloped across the brown stretch of heath which separated the road from the low meadow-lands and the river.

Within a short quarter of an hour, the whole of our party—whether on horse or foot—had arrived at the boundaries of the place of sport. A plashing tributary of the Derwent now only remained to be crossed in order to place us within the hawking precincts of Margery Holm. Brunton was seen standing on a hillock on the further side of the stream, and in a few more minutes every member of the party had passed over. It now only remained for us to receive our particular instructions from the falconer as regarded our disposition over the hawking ground.

I marked with interest and admiration the quiet celerity with which the falconer discharged his functions. Before five minutes had elapsed he had separated us into convenient groups, allotting to each division that portion of the tract

which they were limited to make the scene of their sport, and likewise apportioning to each sportsman a certain number of assistants. As each division was dismissed by him, he hallooed formally after them, 'An' luck, pray I, be wi' you one an' all.'

I formed a complement of the Earl's party, with its auxiliary of whippers. However (accustomed as I was to heron-hawking only), I was advised to see the first pie taken before unhooding my falcon.

'Now, my lords and ladies,' said Brunton to us, unleashing a couple of pointers with one hand, and, with the other, directing his stag-horn stock towards a thick hazel cover, 'you spy yon pile o' nuts. Smack your lashes over it hard an' comely, an' if the little lady don't show black-and-white in a very few minutes, why, I'm much misled.'

The dense hazel cover was soon besieged by half-a-dozen whips, the sharp, incessant strokes of which smiting on the air, together with the halloos of the men, mingled with the merry laughter and exclamations of the ladies as glimpses were caught of the feathered victim dodging in the meshwork of the branches—all combined to stir the blood with eager anticipation, and to redouble the energies of those engaged. However, the plump and philosophic Lord Rich, I noticed, simply contented himself with skirmishing about the bushes in an all but passive manner; and, each time that he spied the bird flitting into the inner labyrinths of verdure, he made no other effort than to furnish verbal information of the magpie's locality. Lord Rich did not carry a falcon, but preferred to toy with the whip.

Nearly five minutes had elapsed, and still the pie had not shown itself so openly as to afford the Earl sufficient excuse for unhooding his bird for a stoop. Once, when Maggie had risen several yards out of the cover, the Earl would have slipped off the hood, had not the falconer ventured to check him. The exertions of the whippers were evidently relaxing, and the sound of their lashes was now almost drowned by the exultant cries emanating from other quarters of the little valley.

'I say, Brunton,' Lord Rich said at last, wiping his brows 'this won't do, you know. The young jade we've got here is too cunning to make a fool of herself. I vote we seek another cover. Tickling a trout is nothing to it!' he added

moodily, and looking savagely askance towards the depths of the bushes.

'An' the Earl votes we do *not*, my lord,' instantly replied Brunton, in almost contemptuous tones. 'Ply away,' he cried, addressing himself specially to the assistants, 'an' strike nearer ground. One good rally sees the lady out!'

The whippers, thus encouraged, made the air ring with a volley of loud reports. The ladies, too, and especially the Earl's daughter, assisted at the onslaught.

Their redoubled efforts were rewarded more speedily than could have been anticipated; for no sooner had the first thongs whipped the air than the bird darted from amidst the lower branches of the cover straight out into the open, and rapidly directed its flight towards a dense mass of verdure some hundred yards away. Only the falconer's keen and practised eye observed the bird at the very instant that it left the cover. The next moment the Earl's falcon was unhooded, and the noble bird, instantly perceiving its prey, swept into the air. Scarcely waiting to poise for the stoop, the falcon then darted irresistibly down upon its victim, which was in open view, and still some distance from its retreat.

My surprise was great when I saw the falcon ride back into the air baffled of its prey, whilst Maggie made her way, quite leisurely and jauntily as it seemed, deep into the recesses of the thicket.

The disappointed falcon still continued to rise, and in a short time had obtained a considerable height. The Earl now gave a shrill whistle, and the dainty creature instantly descended with an arrow's flight, and, after describing several circles about her master, lighted gracefully upon his proffered wrist, and passively submitted to the readjustment of the hood.

'How ever did the pie avoid that magnificent stoop?' I inquired.

'You shall see, sir,' replied the falconer; and, after calling up the whippers, he led the way to the spot where the magpie had executed its artful manœuvre.

'Ah, there's the rut!' the Earl exclaimed, on reaching the spot, whilst he pointed to a groove or rent in the ground scarcely broad enough to admit the body of a terrier.

Brunton then explained that the marvellous cunning of these birds and their strong faculty of self-preservation led them to take advantage of the slightest deviation in the ground

in order to defeat the stoop of the falcon; and he further assured me that, ere the day's sport was over, our party would most likely be doomed to submit to other similar disappointments.

Another cover was soon being besieged by the whippers, and, after a comparatively brief summons, a pie fled from the branches.

Again a falcon was released; and, after mounting and balancing, the well-trained bird made a faultless and unerring stoop upon its victim.

In an incredibly short time Brunton was on the spot where maggie was helplessly struggling beneath the talons of the falcon; and such had been the perfect culture of the bird, that she allowed the falconer to bend down and deprive her of the prey, without displaying the least effort at resistance.

The sport now proceeded briskly and merrily. Bird after bird was bagged by one party or another, amid the cracking of whips, the yapping of pointers, and the boisterous shouts and wild hilarity of the chasers. Brunton's bag attested the goodly extent of the slaughter; and ere the sun had dipped far towards the west, I had more than once confessed to myself that hawking the heron was not to be mentioned in the same breath as the chasing of merry Margery.

A loud and prolonged blast from the falconer's horn now warned the various parties that the sport was ended; and, after the signal, the lashing of the thongs became fainter or more intermittent, and, by slower degrees, the dogs ceased to yap and sniff round the bushes.

The Earl's own immediate assistants, however, still persisted in continuing their exertions upon a small, but close, piece of copse; although the ladies and Lord Rich had already left them, and were cantering slowly away from the vicinity. Suddenly, the pie quitted the bush, and the Earl unhooded his hawk upon it. The magpie, by an artful feint, evaded the stoop, and the baulked falcon instantly prepared for a second point.

Now, it so happened that the Lady Anne and Lord Rich were at that very moment crossing the course by which the hunted bird was pressing for the nearest cover. The magpie, however, far from suffering these human obstacles to prove a hindrance to its escape, actually took advantage of the circumstance; for, just as the falcon was poisoning itself for a second

venture, maggie dashed for a temporary refuge beneath the Lady Anne's light cloak, which was streaming loosely in the wind. However, the brave lady would not have lost her courage or presence of mind; had she not, on raising her eyes, beheld the falcon *hurling itself down towards her*. Closing her eyes, she gave vent to a piercing scream.

Lord Rich—being in the immediate vicinity, and, therefore, the only person who could offer timely aid—without a moment's thought, raised his whip, and excitedly belaboured his lady's cloak and skirts. However, the magpie, in spite of this untoward assault, stuck boldly to its refuge.

The falconer, who happened to be then on foot, was making the most strenuous efforts to gain the spot.

Instantly, I conceived a possible means of delivering the lady from the crowning catastrophe. I urged my horse towards her, and, in passing the falconer—but without checking my speed for a moment—I dipped down and snatched a slaughtered bird from the mouth of Brunton's bag. An instant after, and I had flung the carcase into the air at a point some feet above and to the right of the Lady Anne's person.

My act was performed not a tittle too soon, for the falcon had almost to break its stoop in order to seize the more conspicuous object; whilst the hunted magpie immediately quitted its strange and hazardous place of refuge, and dived into the recesses of the adjacent thicket.

Quite overcome by the fright, the cheeks of Anne Cavendish had turned ashy pale, and she sank into a swoon. Indeed, she would have fallen to the ground, had she not been caught and supported by the arms of the gentlemen.

Brunton, drawing a horn-cup from his wallet, despatched one of the assistants for water to that same gurgling brook over which the lady had leaped so gaily on first entering the field, whilst he himself deftly recovered the excited falcon.

The Earl, meanwhile, had ordered the falconer's son to make all speed to the Countess—who, with her son Charles, had spent the afternoon in driving round the valley of Margery Holm,—and to instruct the coachman to bring the vehicle down to the low road that skirted that part of the hunting-ground. He enjoined the messenger to evince no signs of agitation, and to cover his message by the excuse that the hawking party had decided to escort the Countess home by way of the road.

Some time elapsed before the natural bloom of the Lady

Anne's features reasserted itself. When, however, her eyes had once opened, she quickly recovered her composure, and was shortly enabled to be assisted to the coach. The Earl had ridden on before, and had given his Countess an account of the misadventure.

Lady Anne now hurried into a corner of the vehicle, and burst into a flood of tears. In another instant her abashed lover was leaning over his lady's form and soothingly reiterating his protestations of apology. After the lapse of a few minutes Anne Cavendish's eyes were sparkling through her tears in eloquent forgiveness; and, if Lord Rich had needed any further proof or testimony that his victory was complete, he must have been amply convinced by the subsequent receipt of a smart box on the ears at the moment that the lumbering wheels of the vehicle made their first essay to move.

And I suddenly awoke, my right cheek smarting with pain in consequence of my head having dropped with no inconsiderable force on the great wooden arm of the antique chair in which I was dozing: and, behold, the peregrine falcon and the magpie were (so it seemed) precipitately fluttering back to their oaken brackets over the mantel; whilst the returning array of old-world personages were magically reassuming their dwindled proportions, and jostling and crowding back again into their catalogued places on the old crinkled print.

‘WITH AN ENGAGEMENT.’

By ‘PECKWATER.’

YOUR account is already overdrawn to the amount of twelve hundred pounds, and I will honour no more of your cheques after to-day—no! not even for five pounds—until we have security for what you owe us, and I see some prospect of your overdraft being considerably reduced.’

Such was ‘Banker’ Noel’s ultimatum to his old friend and neighbour, Colonel Peyton, who had received an invitation—which he knew he could not prudently decline—to call at the Newbridge Old Bank on the earliest opportunity, to discuss money matters with the senior partner, Mr. Trenchard Noel.



Margaret's Pet

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'I suppose you will give me some luncheon after all this row you have been kicking up about these few paltry hundreds. Why, you ought to be much obliged to me for making use of your spare cash instead of making a fuss about the accommodation. If you like, you can have the title-deeds of Buxton; the property is not worth much, but it is unencumbered, and then I shall be free from this worry for a time, at all events.'

'Well, we will see about this. Yes, luncheon is ready, and I shall be glad if you will partake of our humble fare,' replied the banker, leading the way into an adjoining room, where the firm partook of their midday refreshments.

'Our humble fare. Ah, that means cold meat and "dry" sherry at 32s. No old Madeira for me to-day, I can see!' These thoughts passed through the Colonel's mind, as he followed his host down the passage leading from that dismal bank parlour which so many impecunious wretches regard as a chamber of horrors, to the sparsely furnished room set apart for the needs of the establishment.

Yes, a large joint of cold beef and bread and cheese on a side table, with a large jug of small beer, caught his eye as he entered the room; his host had been courteous enough to hold the door open for his guest, but he was evidently in a very bad temper, and averse from the display of welcome or hospitality. When they had settled themselves at the table, Mr. Trenchard Noel, jun., the banker's only son, came in from the front office and joined them.

'Ah, Harry, my boy,' remarked the Colonel, after replying to the young man's respectful salutation, 'I have been catching it nicely, and have begged for a little lunch to restore my jaded nerves.'

'Will you have a glass of wine, Colonel? Is there any Ma—deira up, father?' he was going to ask; but the old man anticipated his question with, 'You will find some sherry in the sideboard. We help ourselves, as you know, Colonel, on these occasions, and time is precious, as some of our cashiers and clerks dine here after us,' he added.

The Colonel tasted the sherry—he could not get on at all with his plate of cold beef.

'The old beggar has always given me a basin of soup before, even if he has grudged me his Madeira,' he thought; 'but I'll be even with him. I'll just help myself to a crust of bread and cheese and a glass of ale, and then I must hurry away,' he said,

moving to the side table. 'I must catch the 2.30 train for town, and on this day week you will dine and sleep at Buxton, and we can then give the finishing touch to our business plans.'

In a few minutes he wished them both good morning, and hurried away.

'He is off to Newmarket, of course, and I have let him have one hundred pounds; but not another penny piece shall he draw until I have security. Well, there's Buxton, a nice little property, certainly, and adjoins my bit of land—the two together would make a nice estate. Yes, that they would,' soliloquised the banker.

Then he drank the sherry the Colonel had left in his glass, remarking that 'he hated waste,' and father and son resumed their respective duties; one in the bank parlour, and the other at his desk behind the counter.

Before leaving the room, however, the stern old banker had made known to his son his determination and intentions as to the future.

'Yes, Colonel Peyton is my oldest friend, and were it not for old associations and the regard with which I hold his wife and daughters, I would at once wash my hands of him; as it is, no connexion shall ever take place, with my consent, between my family and that of a reckless gambler, who will surely reduce his own family to beggary.'

It must be mentioned that, amongst his other extravagant freaks, Colonel Peyton had embarked in breeding pedigree shorthorns, having bought at outrageous prices a lot of highly bred cows, many of which proved utterly useless for breeding purposes, and, after some three years' of failure and disappointment, had cleared out the herd at an awful sacrifice by holding a sale at his Buxton homestead.

As Harry Noel and Margaret Peyton were (with the consent of the Colonel and his wife, but with that of Harry's father for the present held in abeyance) engaged to be married, whenever Harry Noel's position warranted the step, these words of his father caused him intense pain and anxiety.

He himself saw nothing but ruin and degradation likely to result from Colonel Peyton's reckless proceedings; but he knew, what his father had not discovered, that Margaret Peyton possessed a considerable fortune left her by a distant relative, but on such conditions that her father could not touch a penny of the principal, which (excepting such sums as were absolutely

required for her education or any other urgent purpose) was to accumulate until Margaret was five-and-twenty years old, or until she married with the trustee's approval.

However, a turn in the tide of the Colonel's fortunes had just set in, for at Newmarket during the Houghton week he simply could not go wrong. He backed Globule, the winner of the Cambridgeshire, for all he could get on, and, after the settlement of the week's account on the following Monday, he returned to Newbridge several thousand pounds richer than when he left it. He arrived just before the old bank closed in the afternoon, and paid to Harry Noel fifteen hundred pounds, and had the credit entered in his pass-book.

'You will join your father in his visit to us this evening of course, and your father will know nothing about my paying this in till the morning.'

Harry assented, and the Colonel, well pleased, departed in high good humour.

'Now, my old friend,' he murmured, as he drove homewards, 'I will pay you off in your own coin and teach you what "humble fare" means.'

Mr. Noel and his son were the only strangers at dinner on this occasion, and the old gentleman was quite prepared to do justice to the good fare he expected to be set before him. He liked what was really good, and did not mean to stint his appetite. The solids were all that could be wished, but that glass of sherry with his soup, and then the champagne of which he drank a second glass, to make sure that his palate had not deceived him, were simply an outrage to a well-regulated digestion. 'Surgit amari aliquid,' he may well have said, had he remembered the passage. Then, after dinner, worse treatment was in store for him. He felt safe with his friend's claret, and quaffed his first glass with confidence, hoping to correct with this generous liquor the evil impressions the dinner wines had created.

But surely some dreadful mistake had been made here. Then the banker drank off a second bumper, and looked painfully at his host as if expecting some explanation of these unlooked-for phenomena.

'Sound, useful claret, isn't it? I had these wines down for my shorthorn sale—claret only 21s. the dozen. I can get you some at the same price, as a favour, if you like it.'

'Heaven forbid it!' the poor banker almost uttered with a

groan, and in a short time he asked, with tears in his eyes, 'Would you allow me to have some hot brandy and water, for really I feel far from well?'

'Oh, by all means—yes, ring the bell, Harry. Ah, this Gladstonian tap is apt to disagree at first, but you soon get used to it; and, as you know, it is necessary for us to economise all we can.'

The brandy and water soon restored the banker's equilibrium, and when Harry Noel had retired to the drawing-room the Colonel plunged at once into business topics.

'I may as well deposit my deeds with you, as I may want farther advances shortly.'

'Now, really, my dear friend,' the banker remonstrated, consider the state of your account as it now stands.'

'To be sure. Harry made up my pass-book this afternoon—here it is,' and he handed it to his guest; and now the Colonel's victory was complete.

'Why, bless me, you have a balance in your favour!'

'Oh, yes; and I can winter comfortably on last week's returns,' the Colonel replied, with a laugh.

'Now, let me implore you for all our sakes to leave off, now that you have retrieved your losses, and invest what you have won.'

'Oh, I'll see to that, depend upon it.'

And he did so, much to the banker's chagrin, for a nice little farm between Buxton and his own estate, which Mr. Noel had delayed securing, although he held a heavy mortgage on it, became Colonel Peyton's property the following week, and he had to congratulate his friend on the acquisition of it with feelings he could hardly disguise, when the time came for him to hand over the title-deeds to their new owner.

But the Colonel had made another plunge during the Houghton week, and had purchased in one lot a breeding stud of thoroughbreds, including mares and foals, and one yearling thrown in, well bred and very promising, but with an engagement in the Rockingham Stakes at Newmarket, the following July, of 300*l.* each, half forfeit.

This yearling filly had been named *The Moneyspinner*, but the Colonel, when he took her as a gift, did not notice that, in the stake for which she was entered, there were several youngsters nominated of the highest breeding, and whose owners seldom made mistakes in placing their blood stock. He accordingly

determined not to go to the expense of training the filly, and the wisdom of his decision seemed to be amply confirmed by the success of a colt—entered in the Rockingham Stakes—at Northampton and Lincoln Spring Meetings, which showed that, bar accidents, the Newmarket race was a certainty for him. The filly was accordingly allowed to run loose in a paddock near the house, and became a great pet of Miss Margaret Peyton's. She begged of her father to let her have the dear 'Spinner,' as she called her, for her own, to be trained and broken for her especial use.

'I take her some corn and carrots every day, and she follows me into the shed, and I am quite fond of her,' Margaret pleaded.

'I am afraid we must part with her if I can find a customer; she will be too expensive a pet to keep,' he replied, unwilling to refuse his darling's request.

He was thinking of the 150*l.* forfeit he would have to pay, and how little would be left of his Newmarket winnings when next July should have arrived; so, much against his will, he decided to offer the pet filly for sale at the ensuing Spring races, to be held in April on the Newbridge Downs. The local auctioneers who officiated at the meeting held an annual sale of blood stock on this occasion, and The Moneyspinner, with her engagement, was advertised for sale without reserve. Margaret was terribly grieved at having to part with her pet.

'I can't think why it should be so expensive to keep this one more than any other; however, I will see what Harry Noel says about it.'

'With an enagement,' she read in the catalogue. 'I can't understand what that means; but no doubt Harry will know all about it.'

But Harry knew no more about it than the charming girl, whose slightest wish was more than a command with him.

'I do hope, if my pet is sold, that she will fall into good hands. Papa says she will only make a few pounds at the best, and I can't see why.'

Margaret appeared to be quite low-spirited; so, to console her, Harry promised he would be present at the sale, and, if needful, purchase the mare himself.

'You know how my father abhors racing and all connected with it, and how often he has warned me against having anything to do with the turf? But in this matter I shall act for myself. We have some land in hand managed by our tenant.

Andrew Foster, on which some colts are kept—for my father is an excellent judge of half-bred stock, and always buys his horses young—so, no doubt, we can manage matters satisfactorily.’

So Mr. Andrew Foster was commissioned by his young master to buy The Moneyspinner, and, as no one advanced on his first bid of 20*l.*, she was knocked down to him amid the laughter and chaff of those who stood round the sale ring.

‘Fancy a farmer buying one with 150*l.* forfeit to pay!’ said one.

‘Ah, you have got a real bargain, my man,’ a bookmaker exclaimed.

‘I’ll lay you 20 to 1 against your filly for the Rockingham Stakes,’ another offered.

But Andrew took no heed of their chaff.

‘The filly is bought by Mr. Trenchard Noel, jun., of New-bridge,’ he told the auctioneer, and shortly afterwards Harry paid him cash to the amount.

Thanks to Miss Margaret’s care and good feeding, The Moneyspinner had grown and come on wonderfully well during the winter, and was now really a very handsome well-grown filly.

‘I’d give a hundred for her if it wasn’t for her engagement,’ a neighbouring trainer said, as she was being led away. ‘But she can have no earthly chance against such a colt as Electric,’ he added.

Margaret was delighted at the result of the sale, and was most grateful to her dear Harry for his kindness in taking such trouble for her sake.

‘You will let me buy the darling again when she is four years old, won’t you? I can get the money from my trustee for this, I am sure,’ she pleaded, and so it was settled between them.

In a few days’ time, however, Harry Noel received a note from their tenant, to say that he could not manage the filly at all with the accommodation they had at the farm.

He wrote: ‘She’s like a wild thing turned out with the others, and I have tried to keep her apart; but she jumps the fence, and I am afraid she will injure herself. Mr. Mason, the trainer, was here yesterday, and he says she ought to be got into steady work, and he will take her on the usual terms; so I think you had much better let her be taken away before the old master comes, for I am sure he won’t like to see her tearing about among his half-breeds.’

To this Harry at once agreed. He replied, 'Let Mason have the filly, provided he takes every care of her. I know nothing about the terms you mention, but I shall leave you to arrange these, and I hold you responsible for the mare's safety.'

Harry was going to have a three months' holiday and to travel on the Continent. Margaret also was going to Germany with her trustee and his family, so The Moneyspinner was almost forgotten by him, but not by Margaret, for, when in her joy she told her father that the real purchaser of her pet was Harry Noel, she was surprised to see how vexed he seemed to be.

'There will be an awful row with the old banker,' he said; 'but you must promise me not to say anything to Harry about this affair until after the first week in July. The fact is, Harry will have to pay 150*l.* for the mare's engagement, and I would rather any one had bought her than he.'

'Oh, I am so sorry, and it is all through me that Harry has got into this scrape,' Margaret cried.

'It can't be helped now. I really have not the money, or I would have kept the mare myself and would even pay the money for Harry, now,' her father remarked.

'Well, I can tell my trustee all about it when we are travelling about and see what he advises,' Margaret suggested, and so the matter ended for the present.

As regards the alleged misbehaviour of The Moneyspinner in her new quarters, the real facts were these:—she certainly was uneasy, and galloped about a good deal; but this simply arose from her high courage and liveliness, and attracted a Mr. Mason, who trained on the adjoining downs, and who had been very much taken with her at the sale; and as he happened to know that the crack colt Electric—trained in the neighbouring Danefield stable—had gone amiss, and certainly would not be able to fulfil any engagements until the autumn, he thought there might be a good chance of getting The Moneyspinner fit for her July race; and, as the other entries seemed to be very moderate according to the reports he had obtained of them, he persuaded Foster, who, he knew, could do almost as he liked with the filly, to propose that she should be placed in his hands for the current season. To this Harry Noel, as we have seen, had agreed. He did not suppose for a moment that the mare was to be regularly trained for racing, but imagined that she would be properly broken and exercised, for which he would have to pay the usual charges. Andrew Foster, however, knew

all about it, and Mason had promised him 50*l.* if they won the Newmarket race, which eventually they did, for The Money-spinner, although no flyer, trained on most satisfactorily, and beat her moderate opponents in gallant style.

Colonel Peyton was astounded when he saw the report of the race, for he was not present at the meeting; but his feelings of disgust and disappointment at having missed this good thing, since the stake alone was worth 1500*l.*, were diverted by his surmises as to the effect this would have on Harry Noel. The Colonel knew nothing of the arrangement with Mason, the trainer, and, as Harry had been away all the summer, he was quite in the dark as to what had taken place.

'I will go and see what the old banker has to say about it,' he thought, and he called that day at the bank and on several days afterwards, but not a word did Mr. Noel utter about these racing matters.

He certainly was aware that a Newmarket meeting was going on, for he said to Colonel Peyton, 'I am glad to find you are not at Newmarket this week.'

'No,' the Colonel replied; 'I have foresworn the turf and all connected with it. I have sold my blood stock at a good profit to go abroad, and henceforth I will steer clear of racing in every shape and form.'

'I am delighted to hear you say this, for your decision will affect for good all that are connected with you,' the banker replied, with feeling.

'Well, this is most extraordinary,' the Colonel thought.

He must see the paper daily, and Mr. Trenchard Noel's Money-spinner must, one would think, have caught his eye.'

But it had not, nor did it until the week after the meeting, when it happened that Mr. Noel wished to refer to the money article in *The Standard* of the Wednesday in the July week. And then he came across the familiar name as winner of a race at Newmarket with Money-spinner. 'A nice suggestive name for a banker's horse certainly,' he thought.

Harry, who had returned the night before, came in to lunch with his father, and appeared just as the principal had made the tremendous discovery that his son—for it could be no one else he felt sure—had taken to the pursuit he so intensely abhorred.

'Do you know anything about this, sir?' Mr. Noel asked sternly, handing the back number of *The Standard* to his son. 'Read: "the Rockingham Stake at Newmarket."'

Harry read as directed.

'Well, what explanation have you to give of this disgraceful affair?'

Harry felt quite alarmed at his father's vehemence.

'I have really no explanation to make,' he at length said.

'I should think not, indeed. Now, mark my words, Harry, this step of yours has fully confirmed my previous wish to dispose of this business—and at once—to the Southern Counties Banking Company. They have made me a most liberal offer for it, and this day I mean to accept it.'

'But, father, pray listen to me—'

At that moment a letter was brought to Harry by the messenger, which Harry opened, and at once handed it with its enclosure to his father.

'This will help to explain matters,' he said.

It was a letter from the Burlington Street officials, with a cheque for 1476*l.* enclosed in a registered envelope, payable to Mr. H. Trenchard Noel. 'We send this to you by your trainer's direction, as you have no account with us,' they wrote, 'with statement of charges enclosed.'

The banker handled the cheque and examined it carefully. Harry could not help watching the varying expressions on his father's face. Gradually its stern lines relaxed, and, against his will evidently, a gleam of satisfaction brightened up his wrath.

'Well,' he commenced; but here he was interrupted by the hurried entrance of Margaret Peyton.

'They told me you and Harry were alone, and I want to see you most urgently,' she pleaded. 'I am passing through on my way home, and I want to get Harry out of the horrid scrape he is in, and all on my account. I knew he would have to pay 150*l.* for buying my pet Moneyspinner, and, as papa cannot pay it just now, my trustee, Mr. Simpson, said I was morally liable, and has let me have 200*l.* to pay Harry and to buy back my pet. Here is the cheque, Mr. Noel. Neither Harry nor I knew anything about "an engagement."'

'Did you not indeed? I rather question that,' Mr. Noel said, good-humouredly, interrupting the fair pleader's appeal.

'Not an engagement of that sort, I mean,' Margaret exclaimed, with some confusion. 'And I promised to say nothing about it till July had arrived.'

'Yes, father, I can assure you my sole intention was to buy Margaret's mare so that she should have her again for her own

use in a year or two's time. Foster could not manage her at the farm, and Mason, the trainer, offered to take her to 'break in, as I thought. As for racing her, I had no idea that this was his intention when he proposed "the usual terms,"" Harry interposed, earnestly.

'And Mr. Mason will expect a good slice of this cheque, I suppose? Well, let him have it and done with it.' Then, turning to Margaret, the banker said, 'And you want to buy your pet mare back, do you, and with "an engagement," of course?'

'That all depends on yourself, Mr. Noel,' Margaret replied, archly.

'Well, you are simply irresistible. Come, my dear, give me a kiss. There! now I tear up your guardian's cheque, and declare the Moneyspinner yours with every engagement the transaction involves. But I recommend you both to weigh well, and at once, what that word "engagement" means, and this time mind that you make no mistake.'

SHOOTING ON THE NORFOLK BROADS.

By H. R. EVERITT.

'Tis here the fowler mans his little bark,
Equipped with gun, and dog of sturdiest strain,
Prepared to weather the relentless blast,
To deal destruction 'mid the feathered train.'

T. HUGHES.

ALTHOUGH one would think that the fame of the Norfolk Broads is a sufficient foundation for any subsequent remarks upon them, let us not be content with resting there, but rather look a little beyond. Note the position of the county. It stands out as the first promontory on the coast, a first offer of foothold, rest, and sustenance to the hungry, sea-journeying migrant. Glance for a moment at any delineation of the county, and you will see that it is similar in appearance to a target-board after several trial-shots with a choke-bore at twenty paces—covered with numerous large blotches, surrounded by a halo of minor ones which represent broads, dykes, rivers, lakes, and ponds innumerable. Consider the variety of soil found everywhere, not only on



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the uplands (they must be passed over as they have naught to do with this sketch), but the marshes; there we encounter rough mingled with fine, swampy and coarse, in juxtaposition to open water—in fact we have a fair sample of almost every soil, excepting, of course, that pertaining to mountainous districts. How often do we not see a rough poor-landed furze-common, unfit for cultivation, intermingling with the marshes till we cannot tell where the one begins and the other leaves off, whilst everywhere the country is intersected with dykes of all sizes, pulk-holes, broads, and other open water. What a home and refuge do not these dreary wastes offer to the aquatic division of the feathered denizens of marsh and moorland; and although, on account of rapidly increasing drainage improvements, we have not nearly so many of these birds as, erewhile, favoured us, yet there are still many more to be here met with than are found elsewhere, leaving us still far in advance of other counties in both quantity and rarity. To enter into and give a detailed list of the birds to be met with, would be too tedious a task to entertain for an instant, but, at the same time, for those who are sufficiently interested and wish to dip deeper, let me refer to the carefully compiled and scientifically interesting works on the subject by W. Stevens, the Rev. Richard Lubbock, &c. However, I will do my utmost to give a fair general idea of a few of the many methods of sport (as regards shooting, leaving the fishing to some future date) now obtained on or about these far-famed Norfolk Broads.

We first uncase our guns from their close-time resting-places in the budding month of May, to take toll from the young rooks, who—most probably on account of this early baptismal fire leaving an impression on the infantile minds of the survivors, not easily to be eradicated—carry for the remainder of their lives that unequalled amount of cunning, shyness, and suspicion, which I have no doubt my readers are personally well acquainted with. Perhaps this primary allusion may be considered out of place, but, as rookeries are sometimes contiguous to a broad and in that case shot from boats as well as the land, I hope you will consider me perfectly justified in commencing therewith.

Speaking of former years, we had then no other shooting for a month, until the young redshanks had become sufficiently fledged to migrate to the saltings, which was generally some time in July. But now the Statute 43 and 44, Victoria, chapter

35, commonly called the Wild Birds Protection Act—would that we could add, *and Birds Eggs Protection Act*—has done away with this class of sport in the broads, fen, and other districts where it was formerly indulged in. We must, therefore, now patiently wait till August's cereal time comes round, and flapper-shooting (*i.e.*, young wild ducks) is the order of the day.

On most broads where the public have shooting rights, several boats, with armipotent crews, may be seen starting on the eve of 1st of August in their eagerness to secure the best positions, as the maxims of 'first come first served,' and 'possession nine-tenths of the law,' are here strictly adhered to. Having secured the enviable berth, most probably at the extreme end of some promontory, the gunners make themselves as comfortable as circumstances will permit, and await the exit of the old and the advent of the new month, usually heralded with something a little stronger than ordinary Bohea.

With the parting rays from a lingering moon, or daylight's first reflective glimmer, the fun commences, continuing till seven or eight a.m., when our sportsmen either return or make preparations for breakfast—and, mind you, these preparations are all-important, as, after a night spent in the open air and chilling marsh vapours, the gastronomic organs become nearly insatiable, naturally causing plates and coffee-cups to be replenished again and again.

The rands* are next hunted, the reedbeds worked through; every available marsh walked, swamps beaten, and places at all likely to contain a feathered inhabitant of any sort, thoroughly investigated. This continues until evening, well repaying the perseverance of our energetic enthusiasts, who, shortly after the sun sinks behind the horizon, and night's lengthening shadows give warning of a withdrawal of daylight, turn their indefatigable footsteps (or paddles, as the case may be) towards the usual feeding-grounds, to lie in ambush for any birds that may be inclined to return, or for distant visitors.

These proceedings frequently continue for a prolonged period, and, by some of the more persistent, are carried on the whole season through, although, possibly, the same sportsmen may not be present at all three diurnal shoots, but only at morning or evening flights (as they are called), according to

* Rushy swamps peculiar to Norfolk.

the number of birds in the neighbourhood and their own convenience.

From about the middle of October until the middle of December the migratory birds are constantly passing over, and then it is that real sport commences, and the wild-fowl shooter is elevated to his empyrean of happiness. Those who have private waters rarely shoot them until then, as their home-bred fowl are sure to attract others, and those on the public waters have their usually much harassed tracts constantly restocked. Both the morning and evening flights have good attendances, and are well worth journeying miles to participate in. The decoys are always full, thus supplying the rivers, ditches, ponds, creeks, and any unmolested haunts sufficiently attractive to invite a short sojourn ; and, when trundling round with his gun, he should be constantly on the look-out and alert, for birds frequently rise from least-expected places.

On the larger broads and more open waters, where there are extensive tracts capable of workage, gunning is carried on (that is, using a stanchion-gun capable of shooting from one to two pounds of shot at a single discharge, with a punt specially constructed to carry it.

Whilst on the smaller and more scattered waters, decoys, tubbing, stalking-horses, and every imaginable device are resorted to, being more or less successfully worked according to to their manipulators.

On the marshes and moorlands, often contiguous, there is also ample sport to engage the shooter's attention : vast flocks of innumerable peewits, golden and other plover, snipe galore, wood-pigeons—in search of their much-appreciated dainty—by hundreds ; but, of course, all depends upon the locality, state of weather, and rights of ownership to the shooting-grounds.

Often when we have had an unusual quantity of continual rain thousands and thousands of acres may be seen inundated, sometimes remaining so for weeks together, and, when at last the flood passes off, and what were before verdant pastures are exposed, waders from the coast and estuaries, together with innumerable flocks of birds of all sorts and sizes, congregate to banquet upon the refuse or young shoots of new vegetation that this diminutive deluge produces. Then it is that the shoulder-gunner digs up his war hatchet and enters upon a campaign against the invaders, resulting in marvellous increases of entries in his diary compared with those of the preceding year. His

modus operandi is either to sink a tub or make some other ambush near apparently much-favoured haunts (with or without decoys as the case may be), and blaze away from morn till night to his heart's content.

Then, again, we have our celebrated 'coot-shoots,' which are now so jealously guarded by the *habitués* that it is a most difficult task for the outsider to gain admittance among the *select* few. They usually take place only once or twice during the year on each water, when all the marshmen, mill-keepers, publicans, gamekeepers, watchers, and every one in the neighbourhood who can muster a gun (no matter of what sort) are privately invited; and if you have been fortunate (?) enough to gain the desired *entrée* and present yourself at the meet on the quay, it will take many years to obliterate remembrances of the sight before you. Without doubt 'tis one of the most peculiar, eccentric reminders of olden times that you ever saw. There are the 'pub' orators—the 'pots' of the village, in fact. There are collected all the rank and smell (beg pardon, I mean swell) of the immediate neighbourhood, their armament consisting of flint-locks, percussion, pinfire and central—old, new, good, medium, bad, and indifferent. The shooters, some in boats, and others on the shore, hem in the birds so that they must either fly back over the boats or face the eager, bloodthirsty division on the bank. There are, of course, exceptions to every rule, and some orderly, well-regulated coot-shoots as well as others; but it is not my intention in this place to comment at length on any method in particular, but rather to refer casually to them, and to hope that, on some future and not far-distant occasion, I may have the pleasure of dwelling at length upon their details fully, exemplifying each with anecdotal additions.

In October, November, and December, we have, more or less, good snipe-shooting in a few localities, according to the season, either by the ordinary method of walking them up from the swamps and bogs they frequent—of which everybody who is not a mere tyro at wildfowling has a fair general idea, and has probably participated in on more than one occasion—or by another method very few are cognisant of, a plan resorted to when the birds are too shy to allow approach within gunshot, and this is called a 'snipe-drive.' Although 'tis a well-known fact that snipe are birds which it is impossible to drive, nevertheless this answers to all intents and purposes to one, and is hereabout so called. The guns surround one end of the tract

(which must be auspicious for the proceeding) in a semicircle, within certain range of the beaters, who flush the birds, causing them to dash over the heads of the shooters like a shower of rockets, emitting their harsh notes the while, and offering a mark at which few but the well experienced are able to make a good average

Then there is the hard weather—yes, I had almost overlooked ‘Jack Frost:’ what a change does he not bring about if his refrigerating wings are spread over us for any length of time! The shooting, so far as wildfowl and migrants are concerned, is comparatively annihilated until the return of mild weather. Repeating what I have before expressed: In East Anglia and the Fen country, a prolonged frost is by no means gratifying to inland shooters; it immediately drives away every single lapwing and plover from the vast tracts of marsh and moist grounds. Snipe, also, with few exceptions, follow the southern course; mallard, on finding the meres and broads icebound, rarely stop long; coots, divers, and such-like, collect in ‘wakes’ and open parts of the water, remaining there as long as they can, then make tracks for the coast; moorhens and other non-migrants seek shelter and food in the low-lying alder-cars and open springs, whilst the wood-pigeons collect in vast flocks, haunting turnip-fields, where they show splendid sport in foggy or stormy weather. But while this lasts, we, after having taken good advantage of the first few days, generally lay aside the gun for the skate and iceboat, as where is the equal to these broad, open tracts of water to be found in England more suitable for the graceful art?—that is when the ice has once obtained a fair hold, embracing all in its iron grip. Yet, on the other hand, when we have those short, sharp, and irregular frosts, they are more or less an assistance to the shooter than otherwise, as they are not strong enough to drive the birds away, but temporarily sharpen their appetites, and cause a collection in the open places where the gun should intercept them.

But my allotted space is getting diminutive and I must not play with my reader’s interest by too long a discussion, however interesting the matter may be to me. I will, therefore, now apply for an adjournment, and postpone the exemplification of details of the herein slightly explained methods of wildfowling to our next merry meeting.

DICK CHRISTIAN.

By 'A QUORNITE.'



THAT memories come to each sportsman game
 Whenever we mention Dick Christian's name;
 Of horses he rode and the leaps he took,
 The duckings he got in Whissendine brook!
 The 'seventeen hundreds' were near their close
 When Dicky, the king of roughriders, rose;
 He hunted with judgment, and rode with pluck,
 While nervous men gazed and exclaimed, 'What luck!'
 The rider in Quorn who'd not go to wall
 Must not only ride—*he must learn to fall*;
 And never fell rider on Quorndon plain
 Who swung himself clearer and grasped the rein.
 Not Assheton, Tom Chambers, nor Charley Downs
 Were equal to Dick when Dame Fortune's frowns
 Seemed likely to bar him from further fun;
 'I'll finish,' says he, 'when I've once begun.'
 The hero whose name is my chosen text
 Rode far from that century into the next;
 Full many a time he'd the pastures cross,
 With Musgrave, and Gilmour, and Captain Ross.
 And often they swore it was famous fun
 To see Dick on young ones get through the run;
 But when better mounted he'd simply round,
 And manage the cream of the Quorn to pound.
 Perhaps the best triumphs of Christian told
 Were over rash 'Paddy' and Maxse bold;
 The Druid has told how Lord Aveland's rail
 Caused Maher in the struggle with Dick to fail.
 But bursts of loud laughter went through the field
 When Dick forced famed Maxse the palm to yield
 The last time they charged the Whissendine brook
 When Maxse quite gaily the 'bumper' took.
 Poor Dick, on a young one with lots of pluck,
 Splashed into the stream, which was like his luck:
 'There's somebody in!' a young Quornite cried—
 'It's only a Christian! We've lots beside,'
 Says Maxse, which set the field in a roar;
 But nobody dreamt of the treat in store,
 When sly Dicky's chance in due time came round
 To pay off that jeer and gay Maxse pound.



"Only a Christian!"

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Next week, when they came to the test again,
 Dick landed, but Maxse's bold charge was vain :
 'Who's that in the brook ?' shouts Jonathan Pick ;
 '*It's only a heathen !*' bawls saucy Dick.
 (There wasn't a servant in Maxse's day,
 Save Christian, would dare such bold words to say.)
 But never a man in that Quornite crowd
 Laughed longer than Maxse, or laughed more loud.
 Now take we our stand on Great Dalby Hill,
 'Neath shade of the walls of the old world mill ;
 'Twas here that they started the famous race,
 When Clinker and Clasher displayed their pace.
 Famed Captain Ross, who was simply afire
 To take out the steam from the Quorndon squire,
 But knew Osbaldiston two stones could give,
 And still o'er that course would staunch Clasher live,
 Got Dicky the Clinker's saddle to take,
 The running from Dalby to Tilton make ;
 They skirted the base of the Roman hill,
 Whence legions of old sought the Twyford rill—
 The first water jump in the famous ride—
 Which Clinker and Clasher crossed side by side.
 Then Dick, who was riding for Captain Ross,
 Pressed Clinker right hard the next stream to cross
 In front of 'the squire'—this was Marfield brook ;
 'Twas wondrous how well they the fences took.
 The pastures are fat, and bullocks abound,
 So fences are high in the fields all round ;
 Both Clinker and Clasher seemed like to yield
 Before they were reined in on Tilton Field.
 That course took but sixteen minutes to run ;
 A thousand 'the squire' steering Clasher won.*
 Five miles they had ridden, rein against rein,
 Dick Christian declared he'd like it again—
 Said he, 'I would like just a peck once more,'
 Though then Dicky's years were nearing fourscore.
 Conceive now the pluck of that bygone race,
 An octogenarian steeplechase !
 Old 'Left Spur' was one of the rider's rare,
 He held his own with the Marigold mare.
 Though she foiled three grooms, and floored them quick,
 She couldn't get clear of the 'one-spurred' Dick ;

* A spirited coloured engraving was published about the period, from the painting by E. Gill, of Northampton, representing the finish of this extraordinary steeplechase.

She tried, and I'll grant did all that she knew,
 And once in the mud the rough rider threw.
 But e'en in that fix our hero took care
 His leg wasn't under the Marigold mare ;
 His hand kept firm hold on the teaser's rein,
 He mounted his steed, and rode on again,
 Went on with the hounds and finished the run ;
 So Marigold thought there wasn't much fun
 In pitching a man of Dick Christian's sort,
 She thenceforth behaved, and went in for sport.
 We've never seen man in our famous shire
 Who could to Dick Christian's record aspire,
 For getting through runs from each famous gorse
 O'er rasping leaps on a troublesome horse.

THE FISHING DUCK OF DONEGAL.

By 'ROCKWOOD.'


 HERE are few tourists who ever think of visiting the north of Ireland. True, no doubt, that at times they may make a flying visit to the Giant's Causeway, and indulge in a picnic or flirtation behind Paddy's pillars, those huge basaltic columns which are amongst the wonders of geology. But the northern counties of Ireland, though as full of scenery, interesting village sights, and village character, as any of the northern or southern counties of England and Scotland, represent so much on the map of dark Ireland. The priest on Sunday may have heard stories, which, if detailed, would save many of our dramatists from borrowing from the French ; but if they are allowed in at one ear, they are discharged at the other, and his Reverence, it is well-known, is bound to keep the secrets of the parish. Since Lever and the author of Handy Andy, good old Samuel Lever, died, we have had few who have been able to hold up to us the humorous side of old Ireland, which has got, seemingly, into the hands of those melancholy attendants upon Irish misfortunes, the 'Keeners.' And yet the Green Island is as full of the droll, the laughter provoking, and the humorous, as in the days of the Knight of Gwynne and Freeman the Highwayman.

It was in an old village in Donegal, about five miles from

Moville, in the road westward to Lough Swilly, that we struck upon some of the people of the country, assembled to discuss 'gravances and potheen,' a mixture which seems to go as well together in the 'most disthrestful country,' as honey, oatmeal, and whiskey, otherwise Athole Brose, in the Scottish Highlands. The time was three weeks after the opening of the Fisheries Exhibition in London, and we had been commissioned to visit the north coast by a company, which, having made money out of the Dogger Bank from lemon soles, cod, and other treasures, brought up in the purse of the beam trawl, thought we might strike on another harvest of the sea, somewhere between Malin Head and Tory Island, or at any rate in the North Atlantic neighbourhood. My companion in the 'kyar' was, in a sense, well up in fishing matters. He was literally an encyclopædia upon the subject. Still, that was no reason why at every place at which we halted he should tell such piscatorial 'whoppers.' Talk about throwing a long line at a Twickenham angling tournament, he could throw a long lie against Kerss, of the Tweed, or 'Boatie' Stephens, of the Dee, and have an available yard of slack in the water at all times. As to having ever *caught* a fish—caught is not the genteel word, friend critic, in writing on angling matters—we do not believe he ever really had hold of one by the mouth, though it was true he was a judge of something on the slate block outside of a shop window.

It was in the old village of Dunakilty, in Donegal, that at the suggestion of our driver we 'bated the baste,' and feeling tired, we resolved to put up at the inn for the night. The 'kyar' was wrapped up in a few old potato sacks (there was no such thing as a shed) and left outside, and the old mare joined company, with an air which denoted that she was of the old low-crouped Ulster breed, and very old and aristocratic at that. We had some potheen in the little delft noggins commonly to be met with in all the Ulster shanties, and then the most delightful meal of Irish bacon and eggs. Bacon and eggs is the national dish of Ireland, no matter who may declaim in favour of Irish stew. You see the pig goes hunting for his own food all over the place, and so develops that nice lean streakiness which makes pork delightful. The hens also seem to work for a living in the same way; and have a soul above cheating even a Saxon into emptying the shells of anything which might not have grown into the best of capons.

Halibut was my companion's name. He originally hailed from the neighbourhood of Grimsby, the capital of the fresh fish trade; but for many years he had seen the sun rise on The Pool, at Billingsgate, and assisted in scattering more shoals of herring with the auctioneer's hammer than ever did a bottle-nosed whale with his back. In the little inn at Dunakilty he certainly hung out the sign 'Fish stories is cheap to-day.' He led his hearers to believe, indeed, that he had been all round the world, whereas he had only been an assiduous student of the Fisheries at South Kensington. He got on all right till he came to the Chinese Department, where he described graphically, as if alive, the work of the stuffed cormorants which, it will be recollected, were on view. Thinking of the land we were in, and the shillelagh crop, I motioned him to be careful. No! no! he went rattling on as merrily as the car over the stones.

'Yes, and you may not believe it,' he said, 'I have seen one of these birds get a poor man ten pounds of good fish in the morning before breakfast; in fact, if they had not such birds the poor people could not live.'

'What loike wid yur fishin' bird be, misther, might I ax,' said a red-haired young fellow in the corner, with grey eyes. 'He was a kind of duck, of course, misther.'

'Yes, well, yes,' said Halibut, 'he was web-footed, and all that; you see he had a sort of purse in his throat, where he kept them, instead of swallowing them.'

'The Lord love you, Halibut, old man,' thinks I to myself, 'if there was a fish in your throat just now, it might stick there for me. To think of your coming here to lecture on such matters to a set of ignorant Irishmen, and make out to their face how infernally ignorant they are.' I motioned him again to be careful. But, with a little drop more of the potheen, he was about to start afresh, when the red-haired man interrupted.

'Well, misther,' he said, 'it was ten pounds' weight of fish your bird killed; now, I'll wager ye a noggin and a sack o' potatoes, if ye'll come over to my cabin at Lough Mochrum, I'll show ye an ould duck that lays me twelve eggs in the fortnight, besides my own for Sunday breakfast, and it'll kill a stone and a half of fish afore dinner.'

'Sure, and that it will, Barney; it'll bate all the comermorunts that ever hed shells on their backs,' said another in the corner.

This fetched up Halibut, as seamen say, with a round turn. To me the challenge meant ructions, for I had been well warned to keep as silent and as civil as possible. My friend ordered some more potheen, and tried to laugh off the matter as a good Irish joke. But no, Barney was serious, and persisted until the wager was accepted and we had promised to come six miles out of our way in the forenoon of the next day, and witness this new style of fishing. The potheen had rather fogged Halibut's memory, and, as he toyed with a rasher at breakfast, he asked me rather seriously what he had been talking of the night before.

'Talking of? Why, you gave the whole Fisheries Catalogue, and if we had sat long enough you would have whistled them Dan Godfrey's music with variations.'

'Phew,' he said, 'that's a weakness of mine.'

'So's potheen, Halibut, my man. Keep your weaknesses well guarded till we get out of Donegal. In the meantime you have betted Barney McClinchy a bottle of potheen and a bag of potatoes, the betting currency of these parts, that his old duck cannot kill a stone and a half of fish, and beat the ten pound basket of your cormorant. The car is at the door. I've settled with the landlord, who is coming as pilot, and will see the bet paid if you lose. So finish up quickly, and we'll start.'

It was all down hill to McClinchy's cabin, which was most picturesquely situated on Lough Mochrum, a nice little lochan of about five miles in circumference, with nice green sloping shoal shores. It was a great place for clapper and snipe, and full of pike. After the usual warm salutations, McClinchy's son, bare-headed, and bare-legged, appeared round the back of the cabin with a boat, and the father brought out of the house, where it had been holding its own with the pig over some potato peelings, the much vaunted old duck. She was not much to look at, as ducks go, but of course that did not matter, ducks are not as stupid as they look. Old Barney made fast a line round her right leg pretty high up, the bird submitting to the operation as amiably as a well-bred carrier pigeon does to the tying on of a message. Young Barney then brought up the tackle which was attached to the other leg, and I had a glimpse of the general idea of the thing.

'Ye see, misther, there's nothing in the world as pike is fonder of than a young duckling just as it takes to the water, and this ould duck has had her family taken from her wan by wan,

almost foreinst her eyes. Maybe I didn't like it myself, misther, and maybe it was the ould duck wanted vingence (here a justice to Ireland gleam shot from out his grey eyes), but me and Molly, that's what I call her, have made them big pike pay dearly for their supper. Now you just see for yourself. Ye've seen nothing like that in your travels, misther, have ye?'

Halibut confessed he had not, as we examined a trace, with a small bamboo cross-yard, to which were tied at lengths of six and eight inches small wooden ducklings coated with a kind of yellow mess like hair, and having hooks in legs and tails. These were all examined and arranged, and the old duck slipped into the water with her dummy collection of offspring six feet behind her, as eagerly as a newly released pointer begins to quarter the heather on the 12th of August.

'Keep laying back with the boat, Barney, till ye're wanted,' was the admonition of the father, who kept walking up the bank parallel to the course of his favourite.

'It's only a case of ledgering with a live duck after all,' whispered Halibut.'

'Whist, you cove,' said I, 'it may be so, but it is very interesting; better than your cormorant.'

Just as I spoke down went the whole trail of ducklings, and up went, as if to fly, the old duck, flapping with both wings, but in vain, and quacking like mad. Barney was up with the boat in a flash, and soon getting her on board hauled in with all his might, for to the line was strung a pike of about twelve pounds weight, which he deftly secured, and slipped the bird over the side again, the latter seemingly enjoying the fun of the thing. We saw three more hooked in the same fashion, and then, remembering the object of our mission, paid the landlord the price of the bottle of potheen, with another for luck, also as much as would buy two sacks of potatoes, and gave Barney an additional half-a-crown. I obtained and hatched out some of the old duck's eggs, but the young birds have no more ledgering instincts than the Halibut boys have for telling fish stories, for their senior dropped romancing after that night in the old Inn at Dunakilty.

THE PAST STAG-HUNTING SEASON.

By SLOT.

HAD any one five-and-thirty years ago ventured to predict such a season with the Devon and Somerset staghounds as the present autumn has given us, he would have been looked upon as having taken leave of his senses. How nigh unto death was the glorious old sport, now happily once more so fashionable, may be learnt from what was written concerning it. Sidney, of Agricultural Hall fame, described a ride on Exmoor in his book on 'Rarey,' published 1858, and after telling his reader how he saw a small herd of red deer, says, 'These were one of the few herds still remaining on the Forest. In a short time the wild deer of Exmoor will be a matter of tradition, and the hunt which may be traced back to the time of Queen Elizabeth, will, if continued, descend to the cart and calf business.'

'The Druid,' that most charming and genial of sporting writers said, four years later, 'the white gates dotted here and there as guardians to the rich, irrigated tracts of which Philip Pusey so loved to talk, told too surely that the glorious days of hound and horse, when 'Fred Knight' led the field over Exmoor, will ere long live only in the hearthside story or the songs of the Somerset dames. The red men of North America have already succumbed before the dread fire-water, and the red deer are equally certain in their turn to bow their antlered heads before Mr. Robert Smith and his water-slucies.'

Perhaps the easiest, as well as the best answer to these doleful prophets, is the season that closed last October with a record of sport second to none since the resuscitation under Mr. Bisset. How little did the writers of those lines know of the work he was doing, and the foundation he was laying for future seasons. Before his death he could afford to kill as many stags as could fairly be compassed in the season. Lord Ebrington, his successor, found so many, that extra days were indulged in, and the hind-hunting season much prolonged, and now the deer have spread in all directions, they are continually roused in coverts which twenty years ago had been long outside their haunts, while the old strongholds are better stocked than ever, and on

the Quantocks, where we believe Mr. Bisset first formed a herd of a few, they now number more than fifty head.

Mr. Basset has been equally successful, and never was any season on record commenced by a more brilliant run than the present one from Cloutsham on Wednesday, August 12th. Beautiful weather followed a wet night and morning, and the rain on Tuesday, as well as that which had fallen during the summer, promised us heavy going if we went out over the moor, 'but we never do go out over the moor during the first day' say the old hands, 'nor ever have a run.' Vain prophets were they, indeed. Perhaps it was a smaller meet than we usually see at Cloutsham on the opening day. We do not aver that there were fewer sportsmen or sportswomen present, it was the camp followers if we may use the term, the eaters and drinkers and mere lookers on who were absent. We had a long tufting which has been so amply described that we need not trouble our readers with it. Miles, the harboursman, was the first to view our stag when he was roused in Yealscomb, and his holloa assured us that the right animal was on foot. Of course he dodged about to begin with, after the manner of old heavy deer, and once met Anthony face to face, but the tufters were stopped on Lee Hill, and the pack 'laid on' at about half-past three, and went through Bell Wood and into the Hawkcombe Bottom, where several people were put out by thinking he would run the usual line to Porlock, instead of which he went down into the Horner Valley, near Poole Bridge, and going above Tarr Ball, held his course on up the valley, and went away into the open forest by Nutscale, not straight certainly, but composed, as old Gervase Markham would have said, of 'windings, turnings and cross passages,' of which, to do him justice, this stag had great store, and we saw, as Kingsley would have put it, 'One long, brown hill after another sink down, greyer and greyer behind us, and one long, grey hill after another swelled up browner and browner before us,' until at length the valley of the Doones was reached, and we got down the side of the Coombe, from which 'girt Jan Ridd' watched his enemies so persistently, to find the deer had soiled in the Badgeworthy stream, and that we were able to give our nags breathing time while the busy pack unravelled the doings of the quarry in the water. At length they are away again to the moor by Long Coombe, and we are fain to gird up our loins to follow them over heath, through rushes and miry places, until Farley water is reached, and there commenced another of those episodes that

make stag-hunting so delightful, and at the same time so different from every other kind of chase, for our deer had laid fast in the water under a bush!

It is not often given to the stag-hunter even, to see such a sight as that, but we had the luck—some of us, at any rate. There he lay with big, glorious antlers and gallant look, all beaten as he was; but the pack are on him, he will not die lying there like a hare in her form, but make one more brave struggle for life; with a grand bound, like his first rush out of covert, he is away again: not far from the water, or long, you may be sure. It is only to seek a fit spot for the last desperate fight. Nevertheless, such music wakes the hills, streams and coverts while he is seeking it, as might bring the shades of Bisset, Russell, Bellew, John Joyce, and other keen stag-hunters to earth again. Stopped once more in their rugged course, where no horse may follow them, the deadly arena is found at last where the desperate struggle for life or death must be fought out. And what a spot it is! Come with us, kind reader, leave your horse behind, and scramble down to it. For secrecy, as well as savage grandeur, it might be the very bath of Diana herself in which Actæon surprised her; a waterfall, a deep pool, precipitous walls of granite twenty feet high on each side, and another waterfall as outlet; the Monarch of the West at bay in the midst. Oh! that a Landseer could have been there to see and paint it. Keep away, good hounds, he is dangerous now on the battle scene of his own choosing, and must be encountered warily. Swim round, if you must lead the forlorn hope, at respectful distance, or, better still, bay from the shelves of rock until the huntsman's art comes to your aid.

Let us turn away while the death stroke is given to so gallant a foe, sufficient to us to know that he is conquered and hear the echo of the baying hounds, and '*the mort*' as it dies away down the gorge towards Waters Meet. He is an old, heavy deer with spreading beam, brow, bay and tray and four on top one side, three the other, fourteen points in all. Three hours had he stood before hounds, notwithstanding his size and weight. What a glorious commencement to the season! Truly we may say with Whyte Melville, 'One notable peculiarity of this wild stag-hunting is the impossibility of calculating on the endurance of a red deer. A light young hart, four or five years old, unencumbered with flesh, and with the elasticity of youth in every limb, can naturally skim the surface of his native wastes like a

creature with wings; but it is strange that on occasion, though rarely, a stag should be found with branching antlers to prove his maturity, and broad well furnished back to denote his weight that can stand before a pack of hounds toiling after him at steady three-quarter speed over every kind of ground, for twenty and even thirty, miles on end.' Yet here was an example of it on the very first day of the season; the galloping or light stag will come in a little further on, suffice it to say here that the interim between our grand opening of the season and the Quantock week was filled with very enjoyable sport, which would have proved still more so had the weather been drier and the rivers less flooded, a great factor in stag-hunting, as we found when the old Winsford deer induced us to cross the Barle in full flood, although he was too wary to do so himself—it was scarcely fordable, and many elected to take the chance of crossing by the stepping-stones, called Tarr or Torr steps—Huxtable led over them in safety, but many rode, some ladies even, and three or four proved the danger of the proceeding by slipping into the roaring current, horses and all. Fortunately every one reached the bank in safety, but it was a parlous case. This deer, which never left the Winsford Hill country and its surroundings, was so old that his horns had gone back and become flat at the top, and what few teeth he had left were loose in his head.

One good day took place from Exford, and was noticeable for a deer found in or near Curr Cleve, so managing matters that all the carriage people and sightseers witnessed the find and first part of the run, and the whole population of Dulverton saw the finish of a capital gallop, in the Barle close to that town.

Another deer in the Winsford Hill country after a good but in nowise noteworthy hunt, set up to bay in the Barle, but the current was so strong that it swept both deer and hounds down stream, and the former was drowned and recovered some considerable distance below where he stood at bay. In truth the waters have been so heavy as to prove a great drawback to the pleasures of stag-hunting during the past season.

The Quantock week next came on the scene, and Mrs. Bisset kindly took in the hounds and hunt-horses at Bragborough, as usual. The sport was, perhaps, a little beyond that usually seen here, as they killed a stag, we believe, each day, and one who had an affection for the low country, took them to within a couple of

miles of Bridgewater, and then sought shelter in some farm buildings, where he was killed, but the leaf was too much on to make riding over such a country as this enjoyable, or even feasible in most places. One day on the Quantocks is very much like another, the principal difference being in the amount of pic-nicing which takes place, as the runs nearly all take place over the same ground, and very bad ground it is for horses to travel. In fact the haunts of the deer here are circumscribed, and they were lucky to kill as many as they did. Many do not go to the Quantocks with the pack, and we are not certain that they are not the wisest. On returning to Exford they soon had a meet in the Yard Down Country, and such a run as they had from the Friendship Inn is not often recorded, even in the annals of the Devon and Somerset. The big stag in whose favour the fixture was made had moved off, but there was a galloper or light deer at hand, lying by himself, and in a happy moment the Master determined to hunt him. They drew for him with the pack, and in a few moments he was away; a few more passed to give him law, and get the field together, and then commenced a run that in after years grey-headed old men who saw it will recall to show their grand-children what stag-hunting was in their day. Moles Chamber, the worst bog on Exmoor, was luckily left behind at starting, and without going into all the details of this grand gallop, we may say that they made a moorland point of eight miles to Badgeworthy Water in about five and thirty minutes, something to find out whether we were on stayers or not, for many soft, and more than soft, places came in the line, and the best of the moor rides heavy this year, and then away over the next hill to Chalk Water, Black Barrow, Luccott Moor, and Nutscale, very little ease for horses, as we followed on the well known track to Cloutsham Farm, and so on to Horner Green, round by Luckam Allers, and back to Horner Mill, where the deer got mixed up with the mill-wheel, which luckily was still, or the pack must have been much damaged. As it was, the deer was got out and killed, while a few hounds were somewhat injured, thus ending a grand run of eighteen miles in a little over two hours and a half. Not racing but a nice hunting pace all the way, and most enjoyable to those who had *two* horses out that could travel through dirt; the second horses luckily came to hand about half-way through. We have known such a run when they were wanting, but the remembrance is not so pleasant.

Before September was out we had another specimen of what young light deer will do. The meet was Cloutsham, and the deer roused in Wilmotsham Wood broke away to Wilmersham Common, and up the Chetsford Water to Nutscale, from which point we may have been certain that we were committed to a forest run, with such a light deer before us. Yet it was some time before most of us realised the situation, and treated the matter *au sérieux*; in fact, not until Luccot Moor was passed, and we crossed the Porlock Road for the Weare Water, did the hounds begin to race, and men to ride, and some even charged the Moor Wall at Black Barrow, an unusual proceeding in this country, but it ended without accident; in fact, better than crossing the wet ground beyond, which emptied a saddle or two, and the crowd began to tail off as we raced away for Mr. Snow's Deer Park. When our deer crossed the Badgeworthy Water, where a fisherman, in some sort, altered his course and turned him away for Brendon Two Gates; things began to look serious for those who had not both blood and condition under them. Yet there were those who could still hold their own, and well see what hounds were doing, albeit most of those, we fancy, would have welcomed some sign of either a second horse or a kill. But no; although, we believe, the deer was not going at ease, and hounds were not very far behind him, on he went, and beyond Exe Head Hill the country became deeper, more lonely and wilder every mile we travelled. In fact, we might well think of Whyte Melville's lines:—

‘From acre to acre the moorland is spread,
And acre by acre fleets under his tread;
Untiring and swift as he stretches ahead—
For life to contest.’

True it was, acre by acre was passed, and mile by mile was measured, and the pack kept on like wolves, ravenous for their prey, and apparently as untiring as Fate herself. Few landmarks to measure our flight by in this desolate region. Never was the wildness of sport better realised than in this moorland gallop, and it came home to us more and more as one after another dropped out of the ranks, and drew rein in despair. Not even in that immortal hunt in which James Fitz-James sacrificed his gallant grey on the banks of Loch Katrine, could it have been much better realised. On they went by the head of Farley Water, the Chains (name of dread to Exmoor men), and

Pinkworthy Pond when he soiled, towards the Bratton coverts ; ere reaching which we found that—

‘The horse and his rider shall labour and strain,
The rowel be reddened and tightened the rein,
And the stag-hound shall droop ere a furlong he gain,
On the King of the West.’

But rowels were reddened in vain, and the sound ground under boundary-fences ridden to no purpose, so that a good part of the field pulled up for good and all, going across the deep land towards Woodbarrow. Be it known that Exmoor men consider this quite legitimate when a four-year-old deer is before them, and many a native who would go to the end after an old stag, will pull up from the pursuit of a light deer. A story is told of two Exmoor farmers riding together, and on their ponies showing signs of distress, one said,—

‘I shall pull up, this is a light beggar we are hunting.’

‘No, no, come on,’ said the other, ‘I can go on yet.’

‘Aye, you can go on, but remember, if you can, ’tis my blood you’m ridin’ on,” called the beaten man after him, anxious for the honour of his pony.

There were some now able to go on and disappear from the view of their less fortunate companions, as the deer took to the enclosures by Parracombe, and soiled in the water hard by. Greatly were the worthy farmers, who were attending a sale of cattle thereabouts, disturbed by the sight of a stag in their midst, and well they might be, when the hounds had met some thirty miles away, but we did not linger with them, going on across some intricate enclosures to Colley Wood at Heddonmouth, and then setting up to bay, showed that he could fight as well as run, and wounded three or four couple of hounds before the huntsman, and the few who followed him, could come to their assistance and give the death stroke. Perhaps, a severer run, or one across a wilder line (he traversed what is technically called ‘the moor,’ from east to west) has never been seen, and the pace over a great part of it was racing ; in fact, it was too good, and most men and horses find a thirty mile point more than they can conveniently compass, especially as the ground rode on this occasion.

Besides such grand deer as these we have recorded, of course in every season there are to be found old, heavy stags that can scarcely keep out of the way of the tufters, and are killed nearly as soon as the hounds are laid on, and this has been no excep-

tion ; then there are the incidents of deer taking to the sea, and very exciting incidents they are after a good run, or if a strange boat is in sight, and the sailors are by no means above exercising the rights of flotsam and jetsam, and making a capture were it possible. Deer have, of course, this autumn sought the Severn Sea for safety, but not, that we call to mind, after any good run, but we believe that a brace either took to the water or were killed on the sands one day in the Porlock country, or between that place and Glenthorn, but not being out, we are not certain as to the facts.

Fighting deer, always to be met with as October is neared, have been more common than usual this year, and one in the Dulverton district wounded several hounds and killed one outright in the last week.

The season was wound up with a wonderful run from Haddon of seven hours' duration, and a kill by moonlight a run which would be tedious in description, but in which all the art and science which is required to kill a wary and cunning old deer, who does not mean to go many miles away, was brought into play; continually lost, fresh found, lost again, the hounds baffled in water, then foiled on land, now the pack depending on the huntsman's knowledge of his craft, then the huntsman trusting entirely to their instinct, is such an exhibition of patience, woodcraft, and perseverance as can be seen in no other chase but that of the wild red deer, closed the season of 1891, and the sport of stag-hunting, which brings a regular Pactolian stream into the West, and increases in popularity and importance from year to year is once more concluded, and the shoals of visitors, sportsmen, and otherwise, which have put untold gold into the Devonshire and Somerset people's coffers are departed. Little did they think far back in the fifties, when Mr. Bisset resuscitated stag-hunting, what a train he was laying for the influx of wealth to the lovely Western counties and how wild stag-hunting was once more to take its place as the grandest of all in our catalogue of English sports and pastimes. A little respite, and then the hind-hunting begins, but although she is even a better, more crafty and stouter beast of chase than her consort, hind-hunting can never be so popular as stag-hunting. Exmoor before Michaelmas, and Exmoor after it, are two very different places to hunt over, and only natives and a few very ardent and hardy disciples of the chase, care to face the storm, fogs, and bad weather of late autumn and



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winter on its bleak uplands to pursue the sport of hind-hunting, grand as it is.

A TANDEM ON SNOW-SHOES.

By WILF POCKLINGTON.

I WAS walking slowly down the principal street of Denver—the lovely, if not the loveliest, city of the West—one day in the late autumn not two years ago, when I met an old friend, Isa Heron, a genuine Colorado climate product, unproduceable and unknown outside of that wonderful state; unknown as regards a product, but individually, known to the farthest corner of the land that floats the ‘grease-spots and gridiron.’ He had wandered east, west, and south, but always came back to Colorado, oscillating like a pendulum between Denver and Leadville, and is credited with the assertion, that he ‘would rather be a dead cat in Leadville, than an Eastern merchant prince.’ It may be as well to state that, owing to the rarefied atmosphere of the high-perched city of Leadville, no cat lives there longer than about forty-eight hours.

Of course, I was glad to see him, and listen to the story of his adventures since he saw me last. He was a wonderful fellow for meeting with striking accidents, and was in consequence nicknamed ‘Jonah.’ If he boarded a train, it was sure to be the one of a thousand that ran off the track or collided; he was on the ill-fated *Oregon* when she sank, and was one of the survivors of the horrible Johnstown flood; with such thrilling experiences, it followed that he had always something of interest to relate. In business he was a mining expert; in pleasure, the greatest all-round sportsman the sun ever shone upon, and had won more ‘impossible’ wagers and taken more crazy odds than any man I ever met. In course of conversation I found he purposed going on a two-hundred mile driving jaunt, to look at some outlying mining property which was about to be floated, and induced me to accompany him, saying we were sure to have some fun before we returned. Accordingly, two days later we started, with a pair of horses harnessed to a most curiously shaped wagon, running on four wheels; the peculiarity of shape arising from a number of small lockers and cupboards that ran around the ‘box’ or body of

the wagon, which appeared to contain everything, from our spare cartridges (for we shoot grouse and quail from a wagon in the west) to a complete outfit for making cocktails.

After a wonderfully pleasant journey of about two weeks, stopping from time to time at various ranches to spend the night, at all of which resting-places the advent of Isa Heron was celebrated as a general festival, we reached the mine. Every one loved that man for his genial nature and social qualities, from the 'uncle' who held his horse, to the thrice millionaire who wanted his opinion on canine or horse flesh. The mining fraternity formed no exception, every one seemed to know him, although the camp was only three months old, and he had never been there before.

'You're running it mighty close, Mr. Heron,' said the foreman of the works then building; 'we are expecting our first flurry of Canada thistles [snow] almost every day, and I guess you would find it inconvenient to be caught here for some weeks, until the Indian summer set you free.'

Heron laughed, and said, 'It wouldn't keep me, Jack; my horses are two old-timers, with a good turn of speed on grass, and used to snow. By the way,' he continued, 'has Scatterwell been up here yet?'

Now it transpired that Colonel Scatterwell, the individual to whom he alluded, was the only man who had ever beaten Isa in a fair wager for a matter of \$1000, and being pretty deep in the 'wild cat' business, was almost as widely known in mining circles as Heron, with this difference, however, that the Colonel was not liked. This I did not discover until later, and when the foreman informed him that the Colonel would be up there during the week, I observed, but did not understand, the obvious grin which spread itself over Isa's face. Next day, as it happened, Colonel Scatterwell arrived, but we did not see much of him until night, when we all dined in the agent's frame house.

He had ridden in on a magnificent horse, and boastfully stated that he was staying with some friends: 'Great swells, you know. Large ranche, forty miles, sou'-sou'-west.' He kicked at having to stay overnight in such rough quarters, and only did so because he wanted to see Heron.

'Haven't seen you since three years last fall,' he said, in a patronising way, 'when you were so deuced unlucky as to back your opinion against mine! You swore to get even, Isa. Ha, ha! but it takes you a long time to do it with Old Scat.'

Heron, I knew, was about the last man to stand tackling in

this way before a crowd of men, so I expected an outburst, and was surprised when he answered quietly, 'Do you think so? You see, I've been very busily engaged this last year or two.' After a few commonplace remarks he said, 'That's a nice horse you rode in!'

This was evidently playing into the Colonel's hands, for he rose at the bait like a muscalonge.

'Yes, cost me a pile of money. Can cover a mile, rough or smooth, under two minutes forty seconds.'

'I guess not,' said Heron, quietly.

'You dare not back that opinion for a cent, sir!' flashed back the Colonel.

It was now getting interesting for every one present, and I felt rather annoyed when Heron got up, without a word, and slowly quitted the room, leaving the Colonel red-hot, and openly denouncing him as a 'weak, invertebrate bluffer.'

In a few minutes Heron returned, and sat down without speaking. At him the Colonel went, repeating, 'You dare not back you opinion for a cent!'

'You make me very weary, Colonel—very weary,' said Heron, in reply; 'we haven't a stop-watch in the camp, and I am a little too much enervated by a residence in the effete east to return to the "bowie-blade-and-argue" period' (stopping the hand with a knife-point was the old way of timing); 'still, I'll tell you what I don't mind doing—I'll take four lengths start, and pace or run, go-as-you-please, my pair and carriage against your saddle horse, distance one mile.'

Without stopping to think, the Colonel cried, 'Done!' I take you for \$5000.'

'Make it \$10,000, Colonel,' said Heron, with an aggravating smile.

'D—n it, I'll make it \$20,000!' was the reply. 'Cash down, cheques are good enough.'

'Now, I don't want any squabbling over this matter,' said Heron, 'so I guess we'll draw up an agreement we cannot misunderstand and back out of in the morning.'

So he sat down and roughed out an agreement that he and his team and 'carriage' should meet the Colonel in the saddle in a go-as-you-please match for \$20,000 a-side; distance one mile. Match to be run inside of forty-eight hours, or forfeit.

After that drinks flew round, the cocktail locker was brought in, and at a late hour we sought our beds.

The last thing I remembered that night was Heron laughing, until I thought he would injure himself.

Next morning I was awakened by a shaking, and, getting my eyes open, found Heron sitting on my bed, the picture of happiness.

'Get up,' he said; 'here's a lovely morning for the race.'

'Race!' I said, recollecting the overnight wager; 'yes, you made a nice ass of yourself, didn't you? making a ridiculous bet like that. He'll gallop away from you like smoke. He's not like an honest sportsman; his whole life is spent in picking up pigeons like you.'

'That's so,' said Heron, calmly; 'in the meanwhile get up and look out of the window!'

I did so. Great Scott! Snow! snow! snow at least two feet deep, covering the foot hills and prairie as far as the eye could see, and still coming down. I turned and looked at Heron. A lucky get-out for you, my friend. Of course, the match in forty-eight hours is off.'

'Well, not much,' was the reply. 'I figured on this. There was over half a foot when I made the bet, that's what I went out to see about. Now I've got that "smarty" in a tight place, and I'll squeeze him like a lemon. He has been making money lately, and the cheque is good; so good, my boy, that we will be in 'Frisco and cash it in person before he gets out of the prairie.'

Not a word more would he say, except to tell me to keep my mouth shut. Well, that day will never be forgotten. Such a game of cross purposes I never remember. The Colonel, mad as a hatter because the match could not be run, Heron contenting himself with saying it would clear, or that he hoped it would; and evading every other query that was put to him.

'Ask Jack quietly what is the distance to the nearest dépôt,' he said to me.

'Chian; forty-six miles as the crow flies,' was the reply, and when I told him, Heron whistled with an air of great contentment. So passed the day. Next morning it was bright and clear, and when I descended to breakfast, Heron came in all rosy, carrying snow-shoes in his hand.

'Lazy fellow!' he said. 'Why did not you get up and help me to flag out the course.'

I looked out of the window, and sure enough there was a circular track marked out with red flags on upright pieces of wood.

'Two laps to the mile,' he observed. 'Sh-h-h! here comes the Colonel!'

'Well, Colonel, what time will suit you best to-day? early, I hope! I'm anxious to get away.'

The Colonel laughed. 'A very good joke, Heron—very

go—— what is the meaning of that foolery?’ he said sharply, pointing to the track.

‘Well,’ said Heron, slowly, ‘that’s the half mile course we are going to travel twice round, before seven p.m. to-night.’

‘You’re crazy, man!’ was the reply; ‘a horse could not get round there in an hour, if at all!’

‘Sorry you think so, Colonel; because my team’s going round. If you don’t like to do the same, well, that ends it, but I hate to have to take walk-over stakes.’

The Colonel turned slightly green, and looked very vicious as he said, ‘You’ve over-reached yourself again, Mr. Heron. My horse can go where your’s can!’

‘Do you want to bet another \$20,000 on *that*, Colonel?’ was Heron’s quiet reply, at which the whole party laughed, while Colonel Scatterwell said peevishly, ‘I want no bluff. Twenty thousand dollars is more than you can afford to lose. Say twelve o’clock sharp!’ and walked out of the room.

Excitement now ran high, every one expected a perfect circus, and also that Heron would lose. He contented himself with telling me to have everything packed for leaving directly after the race, and was in the stables until just on noon. Then when we filed out to see the fun, there, at the starting-post was Heron, his horses hitched tandem to the wagon, the body of which was on the snow level, the wheels being in the snow. What followed is almost beyond description. Only a very faint idea can be given in words.

The Colonel came out, and with some labour got his horse to the starting-point, the odds being six to one on the Colonel, and two to one neither competitor finished in an hour. The pistol cracked, and away they went. The Colonel dug in his spurs, and by leaps and jumps progressed, while Heron sat at the post, laughing. Then he touched his team with the whip, the box of his wagon ran off (leaving the wheels and axles behind), being thus transformed into a sleigh on runners, and so explaining the queer formation that I noticed before, while, wonder of wonders, his horses, at an easy five-mile-an-hour gait, passed the Colonel as if he were standing still.

‘By the shoemaker who made the sandals of the piper who danced before Moses!’ yelled Jack, the foreman, ‘Nevada staggers as I live!’

The above expression is not precisely the one he made use of, but it gives a faint idea of what the original might have been.

And now for the sequel. Heron covered the mile inside of twelve minutes, and before the Colonel could get his horse back to the house, claimed the stakes and got them. Then there was trouble, and the Colonel had to be held down to prevent him shooting Heron. The fact was that the two horses were, as the foreman said, Nevada stage-horses, and had been trained to wear snow-shoes. Heron had a set of them in his cupboards, and that was why he slipped away and got his horses to the post before we came out. These shoes are made of thin steel plate, and measure about nine by fourteen inches. The horses are shod with long heel-calks, which go through holes in the snow-shoes and prevent slipping. The Nevada stagers are all drawn by snow-shoe-shod horses in the winter; and a distance of fifty miles a day will be covered by a good team with an experienced driver.

The clause, 'go-as-you-please,' and the word 'carriage' in the agreement, covered every valid objection, and the Colonel paid up against his will, simply because his cheque was posted. The moon being near the full at this period of the month, we started away without delay, amid the laughter and good wishes of the whole camp, leaving the Colonel raving.

'Good-bye, Colonel!' laughed Heron; 'sorry I could not get even before.'

Stopping at a ranche for the night, we made the railroad dépôt next day, and the evening of the day following, we cashed the cheque in 'Frisco, and returned to Denver, leaving the horses at Chian. I heard afterwards that the Colonel did not get out of the camp for ten days, and don't envy him his sojourn there. It was a long time before he heard the last of Heron's tandem on snow-shoes.

CHARLEY WELLS' YARN.

By 'SURCINGLE.'

YOU remember the year Sir Brian won at Croxton?' said Charley Wells, at one of those interviews during which Charley would purr forth more 'Sportiana' as he fondled his 'rummer,' than would Tom Wingfield in a week.

'Certainly.'

'Well, perhaps you don't know how near that horse was to losing. I never told anybody before, but now that Sam



"A Tandem on Snow-shoes"

1890/11

see page 54

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Hoggett and his boy are both gone, it makes no difference. You know Sir Brian was by Saucy Boy out of the Endall Maid, and of course the Vale money went on to any amount, for I never came across a keener lot than the Belvoir boys for backing their own cattle, except it might be the Tykes. The bookies were well aware of that, too, and finding such eager customers, made things right except as to hedging, but when they came to that part of the performance, they found themselves in about the same position as the Scilly islanders, when they tried to get a living by taking in one another's washing.

'It was therefore the horse against the faculty and the field, and excitement rose to fever heat as the time for the race drew nigh. Two trials came off, a tout being discovered on the second occasion in Clawson Thorns—the horse was standing at Clawson at the time—but it wasn't supposed that the said tout could carry much news, so they ducked him and let him go; that was bad enough too, for it was a cold March that year, and the poor beggar was half dead when he got to Nottingham.

'The "boys" were well satisfied with the trials, and felt pretty easy considering the amount they had on Sir Brian, and the owner, George Sedgbrook, thought that with trusty Sam Hoggett to watch over the horse, things looked rosy enough.

'Sam had begun life with the Atherstone, afterwards he went to the Tarporley, and got into a scrape there, which caused him to enlist, but while on furlough George Sedgbrook came across him, and, to cut it short, he bought him out; so he came down to Clawson as George's stud groom, bringing with him his wife, and one boy about thirteen years old. This was some time before Sir Brian's year, and both Sam and his wife were "getting on" in life at the time I'm speaking of; but Sam was tough, and, with the help of three men, could turn out very well George's half-dozen and hack, without neglecting the favourite for the Granby Handicap. One of Chatwood's "Invincible" locks had been placed on Sir Brian's door, and the key of this was religiously delivered to George when things had been made snug for the night; not that he had any doubt of Sam, but his mind was more at rest with the key under his pillow, and besides, he could go down and see the horse whenever the longing came upon him, which generally happened just before he retired, and sometimes again during the night. The duplicate key was in the care of the bankers, as it was thought inadvisable to have both about the place.

II.

'SAM's boy (they called him Bertie, but what his name was I don't rightly know) had gone into farm service a year or two before this, and in a field close to Ashby Pastures, a fight about a girl had taken place between him and the waggoner on the same farm, with the result that the waggoner was found dead, and Bertie disappeared no one knew where; but neither Sam nor his wife were the same beings from that day. Sam's roaring songs, and stirring tales about the doings in Cheshire, grew fewer and farther between, though we still managed to "draw" him occasionally when he had got through his third or fourth glass of toddy, and I remember two days before the Park meeting, he was sitting in the "Nag's Head" at Harby, looking so glum, that I thought something was wrong with Sir Brian, and as I had a "bit on" myself, I asked him for as straight a tip as he felt at liberty to give an old chum.

"Bless your heart, Charley," he replied, "the horse is as right as rain, but it's this day two years since Bert left us, and I doubt I shall never see the boy again."

'Well, I said what I could to cheer him up, but beyond getting him to drink success to Sir Brian, I could make nothing of him, and I had made up my mind to go home, when a stranger came in and invited Sam into the little parlour at the back. I noticed Sam had the stable key fastened to a steel chain as usual, at least, there was the chain, and I judged the key was in his watch pocket; it occurred to me that he might meet with foul play on the way back to Clawson, so I waited to keep him company, and a mortal long time I had to wait. At last, about eight o'clock, Sam came out, looking flushed with the drink they had had in the parlour, and the stranger followed, looking as pleased as such a fellow was able to do, for he was an ill-favoured brute, with black eyebrows almost meeting over his nose, and the look he gave me made me think it quite as well I had waited for Sam.

"Hollo, Charley!" cried the latter, "not gone yet? I'm for Clawson; are you ready?"

"Quite; I thought we might as well go together," I replied, and we started at once. Very little passed between us till we got as far as Hose, when the stranger parted company, and we went on together, Sam still being very quiet till we got to the end of the village, when he began to talk.

"Charley," he said, "when do the telegraph offices open at Nottingham to-morrow morning?"

"Nine o'clock, I think," I replied.

"Well, you know I'm no fist with the pen, Charley, and I can trust you," he continued. "I want you to write me a telegram. Will you come into Ward's and do it now?"

'Of course I wrote it for him, and when we had made our quarters good, he bade me good night.

'The next morning when George Sedgbrook went the rounds, he noticed that Merlin, the covert hack, showed all the signs of having had a stiff gallop over a fair stretch of country, and seeing Sam strolling across the yard, he called out, "Sam, who's been riding Merlin this morning?"

"Bolted at exercise, Sir. Got the bit and faced the Harby Hills straight for Stathern. Fancy the threshing machine at Shipman's set him off, Sir.

"D—— the machines, I wish we'd never had them in the Vale at all. However, we'll just have a look at Sir Brian, and then I must get away; it's eleven o'clock now, and I have an appointment at a quarter to twelve."

"It's *half past*, Sir, by the stable clock," replied Sam, pointing to it.

"So it is," replied the astonished master. "Look after things, Sam, and I'll drive as fast as I can to market."

'Away rattled George, and soon cleared enough ground to get out of hearing as well as sight, upon which Sam quietly ascended the staircase and put the stable clock back half an hour, just as I came in through the big gate from the Wong.

"Morning, Charley," he cried. "Come to have a look round?"

"Yes," said I. "How's Sir Brian?"

"He's all right, but he's not there," he said, as I was making for his usual box. "Come this way," he continued. "I thought he would be less liable to be *disturbed* if he slept on this side last night."

'The look with which Sam accompanied these words, and the emphasis on the word "*disturbed*," made me think there was something more in the matter than appeared on the surface, but I said nothing as I followed him into the box usually occupied by Harold Harefoot, a horse entered to make the running for Sir Brian in the Granby Handicap.

"To-morrow's the day," he said, as he whipped off the

toggery and exposed the favourite to my view, "and if Sir Brian isn't as fit as a fiddle it won't be my fault. I think I'll give him a quiet canter and a polish before the governor comes home. He'll be sure to make for the stable as soon as he drives in, for he hasn't seen Sir Brian for nearly a day and a half."

"That's something out of the common," I replied; "especially as it is so near the event."

"Well, the fact is," said Sam, "I made a mistake and gave him the wrong key last night, and that's how I know he hasn't seen the horse, because he gave it back to me this morning without a word, so he had not tried to use it during the night."

'Sam then cantered off, and I went home.

* * * * *

'Half past four Sedgbrook rattles into the yard in his dog-cart. Springing down with visions of Croxton on the morrow, and enlivened by the old port at the "Red Lion," he sings out, "Sam!"

"Yes, Sir," replies the latter, emerging from Sir Brian's usual quarters.

"Don't lock the door, I'm coming in there. Is all right up to now?"

"Look for yourself, Sir; I consider the horse fit for bigger things than Croxton," and therewith he opened the door, and left his master to feast his eyes on as likely a winner as ever made satin whistle in the Croxton breezes.

'After a somewhat long and critical examination, George remarked, in a satisfied tone, "Yes, I should think with Mr. Colman 'up,' and Harold to make the running, we shall pull it off."

"I'm afraid Harold won't be fit for the Park to-morrow, Sir; I can't make out what's the matter with him. Will you see him, Sir? I was going to send for Wilford."

George examined the horse, but could make nothing of the symptoms.

"If it had been Sir Brian," he remarked, "I should have said it was a case of nobbling; but send for the vet as you intended, and we will hold a council of three."

'The council was held, and Wilford, who was, as you know, a man of very few words, gave it as his opinion that it was a case of nobbling the wrong horse.'

III.

CROXTON PARK! It may mean little to the frequenters of the great classic courses, or their modern rivals with the plethoric stakes, but it is *our* race. This is the final rendezvous where we all enjoy one day's sport in common, the last before Kirby Gate for men of 'Hound and Horn.' It is here that the public can see, as at the close of a drama, the people who have figured with the metropolitan packs at many a covert-side, through many a rasping run since last November. 'Cuthbert Bradley' has very ably depicted 'A Croxton Park Wednesday,' in the twenty-third number of the *Notes*, as an accompaniment to the article 'Meltoniana,' but the races are held fully a mile away from the picturesque precincts of the ruined manor house. On the side nearest to Waltham-le-Wolds, lies a splendid stretch of springy turf, bounded on the west by the groves that encompass Lawn Hollow, and skirt Ling's Gorse. Hither come late in March, or early in April, the 'county people' of about half a dozen shires; hither, too, come the farmers, for have they not a race of their own? Hither comes the huntsman of the Belvoir to gather his annual harvest of tips, Tommy the 'foothunter' to receive his more modest douceurs, and hither came, in the year alluded to, Sir Brian, his owner, Sam Hoggett, and W. Colman, Esq., to pull off the Granby Handicap, but there came not Harold Harefoot.

* * * * *

'You know,' continued Charley, 'as well as I do, how Sir Brian romped home, the spoiling of the Israelites that followed, the rejoicings from Scalford to Normanton, the "headaches in the morning," for which Sir Brian was responsible; but perhaps you don't know how the screw was put on to poor Sam Hoggett by the beetle-browed stranger, who had found out the whereabouts of his boy, and threatened to put the American police on his track, nor the scene in the back parlour at Whittle's, where Sam, after hesitating long, bought off the scoundrel by a promise to leave the key in the door of Sir Brian's box that night, whereby Mr. Beetlebrow got into the box, but got nothing into Sir Brian, because Sam had changed his quarters, putting Harold in his place; rather rough on Harold for the time, but Sam gained time to gallop into Nottingham with the telegram: "Hawks Down Wind Sharp" were the words I remember, and the place Washington Pa.

'Great was the wrath of the coper and of those who had employed him, but when they proceeded to secure vengeance in lieu of the lucre they coveted, Sam's boy was far away in the North-West Territories of Canada, where, following the promptings of his Belvoir breeding, he followed the wapiti and mountain sheep on the Rockies, till one day he stepped on a rotten piece of sandstone, and, we hope, passed into the happy hunting-grounds. Sam, too, is gone, so, as I said, there is no harm in telling the tale; but I must say good-night now, and I'll give you another yarn about Belvoir another day.'

THE KING OF THE COLOURS.

By 'BRENTINGBY.'

THE holly at Christmas shines bright on the wall,
 And the beams from the Yule-log right cheerfully fall;
 The berries are red, and as ruddy the glow
 Of those beams on the goblets that merrily flow;
 For roseate hues still enliven the room
 Where we feast in the depth of the winter-tide gloom.
 The rude health on the face of each jovial guest
 Is the work of that doctor of doctors the best:
 It speaks of brave bursts through the keen, bracing air,
 And it matches the hue of the garb that they wear.

Chorus:

The King of all colours is 'Scarlet' so gay,
 For feasting at eve, as for riding by day;
 There's nought like 'Brave Scarlet' the field to adorn,
 'Tis the livery meet for the 'Men of the Horn.'

The North wind careering with clarion shrill,
 Dealing wide-spreading havoc on valley and hill,
 Has swept off all trace of those beauties so rare
 That were limned by old Autumn with marvellous care.
 Each grove in the woodlands has felt his wild will;
 Though their branches are bare, he makes war with them still:
 Remorseless he sweeps o'er the desolate plain,
 Bringing dark drifting storm-clouds to burst in his train;
 But roar as he may, he can't silence the song,
 Nor the far-ringing horn of the bright 'Scarlet throng.'

Chorus:—The King of all colours is 'Scarlet' so gay, &c.

His rage, though he went in a deluge of rain,
 The bright hue of the Scarlet with purple to stain,

His labour is lost : when next morning we ride
We more eagerly don it—those stains are our pride ;
Like scars on the face of the Roman of old,
They're the marks of a horseman who's hardy and bold.
Men oft lend a coat that's too new in its look
To a friend who will give it a taste of the brook,
So files of bright Scarlet still stream o'er the plain,
And relieve the murk gloom of his desolate reign.

Chorus :—The King of all colours is 'Scarlet' so gay, &c.

'Ingenuous youth,' dear old Jorrocks explained,
Should not don the 'Brave Scarlet' till well he's been trained
To ride with good judgment, as well as to 'go,'
And has learned every field in the 'country' to know ;
Lest, like to the beacons of wreckers on rocks,
Or the 'Will-o'-the-Wisp' that the wanderer mocks,
The red patch on the sky-line some lagger behind
Should allure : when the proverb of 'blind leading blind'
May derive confirmation anew by the way
The unfortunate pair go yet further astray.

Chorus :—The King of all colours is 'Scarlet' so gay, &c.

When holidays widen the schoolboy's strict bounds,
And 'Young Eton's' afield—'his first day with the hounds,'
Though sombre his habit, his entry's not good
Till we've reddened his face and 'baptised him with blood.'
His father's old friends all come up with a rush,
And wish him in future full many a brush ;
He's proud of his painting—you'll see, by the way,
That he smilingly wears it the rest of the day ;
He longs for the time when some fortunate morn
With 'Bright Scarlet' his figure he first may adorn.

Chorus :—The King of all colours is 'Scarlet' so gay, &c.

The fair ones all love it, we know by the way
That they fill up their cards—by their 'yea' and their 'nay ;'
The 'Hunt' ball alone gives civilians a chance
With the gaily decked wielders of sword or of lance.
The hostess to 'Scarlet' is wondrously kind,
'Tis the passport a good introduction to find :
Well started, a task is considered half done,
It's *your* fault if you're out at the end of the run ;
Brave 'Scarlet' will further your aims in the strife,
When you're seeking a partner for time or for life.

Chorus :—The King of all colours is 'Scarlet' so gay, &c.

Then bring forth the flagon with holly be-crowned,
 Fill it full to the brim, let it circle around ;
 Upstanding each guest, while our generous host
 Shall invite us to join in this glorious toast—
 A toast that's right welcome to young and to old,
 One that ought to be written in letters of gold,
 A toast to be honoured through ages unborn,
 While our hills and our dales shall resound to the horn :
 With loud 'Tally-ho !' make the roof-trees all ring,
 As we drink to 'Brave Scarlet' of colours the King !

Chorus :

The King of all colours is 'Scarlet' so gay,
 For feasting at eve as for riding by day ;
 There's nought like 'Brave Scarlet' the field to adorn,
 'Tis the livery meet for the 'Men of the Horn.'

SALMON FISHING IN THE LABRADOR.

By J. HARRINGTON KEENE.

TO the sportsman seeking adventure not afforded by our native salmon streams, the rivers of the Lower St. Lawrence (north side) present extensive and peculiar advantages. He need, in the first place, be prepared to face particular difficulty in getting to his destination ; then guides, which are absolute necessities—unless, of course, he goes the right way about it—may not be procurable at the time, and he must wait ; again, when on the river he has taken, he may find his salmon flies almost useless, not being of the right pattern ; next come the torments of those very fiends, the mosquitoes ; and last, though most important of all, there is real actual and ever-present danger by reason of the varying character of the currents and the terrific violence of the water in the rapids and pools. The generally magnificent sport, however, compensates for many disabilities. Who amongst genuine anglers would mind risk and inconvenience if he could kill fifteen fish, weighing 152 lbs., in one day ? Yet this was done on the Natashquan in 1880, and both Messrs. Sothern and Florence eclipsed that take in 1879 on the same river ; whilst on the 'beautiful Godbout' M. Conneau killed fifty-seven salmon between dawn and dark a year or two previously. Granted, these are ex-

trema takes, but they are indicative of the possibilities of these splendid tributaries. In 1880 not less than 3550 lbs. of salmon were taken by four rods of Mr. Jervoise's party in a trifle over a month's fishing with the salmon rod and fly. This record the writer is quite prepared to substantiate at any time.

It matters little which of the rivers one selects—Moisie, Godbout, Natashquan, *et hoc genus*, the characteristics are very similar. In the case of the Natashquan, the broad estuary was in 1880, and probably is now, much overnetted—one Corbonneau rented the netting then. Notwithstanding this fact, however, the fish which ascended were large and numerous beyond the most ambitious desire of the fisherman. It is true, the largest of that season did not go over 25½ lbs.; but a very great proportion of the captures came to little less, and the sport a twenty-five pounder gives in a full river is by no means to be despised, especially when it is borne in mind that one cannot follow the flying—no other word expresses his speed—fish by means of convenient banks and stepping-stones. It is true that on the 'beautiful' Godbout, the convenience of the *dolce far niente* mood is consulted by the proprietor, whose sympathies are provoked by the lazy fisherman; but the Natashquan is much lower down the Gulf, and its savage uncouthness and rocky impracticability are as Nature made them—seeming to say, 'Take me as I am or leave me; I want no feather-bed fisherman here.' No more significant fact of the perils of this river need be cited than that of the tragic death of Francis D. Astley, Esq. (Scots Guards), by drowning, below the second Falls, on the very last day of the 1880 season. He, with two Indians, had proceeded to bring down a canoe from above the Falls, and in shooting a rapid the nose of the frail bark pitched on a hidden reef, breaking the former right off. As the boat filled Mr. Astley sprang in to swim to the rocks, but, excellent swimmer as he was, the treacherous and all-devouring eddy drew him under and drowned him before the eyes of the rest of the party. Not till several days after was the body recovered.

It is not the intention of the present writer, however, to enlarge on the dismal details of salmon fishing in the Labrador. It has its eminently pleasant side. Unlimited sport is something of which one very seldom tires; then a bit of grey seal shooting is by no means a bad alternative, and an occasional encounter with a bear might while away a tedious hour, especially if it be a hand-to-hand one, you being possessor only of a bowie.

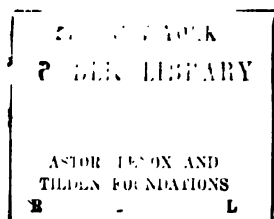
The Indian guides for the rivers of the Lower St. Lawrence are chiefly derived from Mission Point, on the Restigouche river, where they form the remnant of the once-powerful tribe of the Micmacs. They are under the spiritual care of a Roman Catholic priest, to whom they are much attached, and that deservedly. It is a curious ethnological question why the so-called red man is improving so rapidly off the face of the earth, and one not capable of immediate reply when the splendid physique of these men is considered. Some of them stand over six feet in height, and are tremendously powerful, whilst their sinuous grace of movement in a canoe, even amidst the tumbling torrent of a St. Lawrence rapid, is something once seen never to be forgotten. In character, too, they are obedient and docile to a degree, far beyond the French-Canadian—that is, when he is sober. Let the Indian once get half drunk, however, and if you upset him he is the very devil, and the best remedy, dictated by experience, is to forthwith complete the job and make him utterly drunk and incapable. Previous to this desirable consummation the knife is a much too-ready weapon. The writer once had a narrow escape, and only by promptly ‘winging’ the Indian, and covering him with his Derringer till the broken arm *argued* the matter in his mind, was the feud effectually stayed. The next morning there could not have been a more abjectly ‘penitent thief’—for ‘Tom’ stole the whiskey that roused his sense of the wrong done to his race by the white man. They are, anyhow, indispensable for portaging, and as ‘gillies’ for gaffing or pointing out a fish they are equal to the keenest Scotsman, being born salmon fishermen, though possibly not over scrupulous in their methods of capture. One ingenious way of *getting* salmon, by taking advantage of its natural propensities, is in this connexion worth noting. By the third Falls, on the Natashquan, is a flat rock alongside the salmon leap; *across* this salmon leap is stretched a bar of wood, in such a position that the salmon in jumping hits it and falls on the table rock beneath. This is paralleled by the story told of the Frasers of Lovat, who were wont to astonish their guests by the involuntary cooking of a salmon. A kettle of boiling water was placed by the side of the fall, and the salmon, on failing to reach its point, would fall back into the pot. *Credat Judæus Apella*; but the story is recorded in annals that never lie—*id est*, books on fishing.

The method of fishing on these rivers is difficult, because of



'rocks before you, on each side,
and behind you'

Handwritten signature or text, possibly "Handwritten" or "Handwritten" with a flourish.



the surroundings. You have rocks before you, on each side, and behind you, and if the caster be not an adept he breaks the points of more of his 'two-and-sixpenny flees' in one hour here than he would in a day on Tweedside. Then, again, in fishing in pools above falls the fish often turns and bolts to go over, and, of course, the only thing to do is to give him the butt and *hold on*. Main strength is a necessary ingredient in the Labradorian angler. Fishing from the bark canoe is also a peculiarity which requires some practice for its successful accomplishment. The Indian stands behind, and you poise yourself directly on the centre board; the delivery of the fly is difficult, but even more so is the handling of the fish, especially if he take it in his head to bolt down to the next pool. A salmon, at first presumed to be of enormous weight, has been known to be hooked and followed for a long distance in this way, from rapid to rapid, and on it being at length landed it has been found to be dead and almost stiff. It had been hooked in the tail, and had towed the boat to the first rapid, and on the strain of the line being put on it the consequent retardation of its course had opened its gill covers, and the rushing water had kept them so, killing the fish by asphyxia.

What can be done with such enormous quantities of fish when caught may be asked. Well, of course, on most of the rivers there is a cottage; on the Natashquan there is one of really convenient size, verandah where your rods can be hung up, and all convenience—and equally, of course, there is an icehouse. The fish are taken to this almost as soon as caught, and every two or three days the Indians set apart a time (usually early morning), and proceed as follows to clean and pickle them. A clean, broad bench is placed in a convenient spot, and, with sleeves stripped to his shoulders, the cleaner stands in front of it. In his right hand he grasps a formidable knife, about ten inches in length of blade and with a square tip, thick at the back, and of razor keenness at the edge throughout. With his left hand he now grasps a salmon by the tail, and flings it on the board with the tail to the left of him and the back of the fish fronting him. He now lays his bare left arm on the fish from tail to head, and inserts the knife at the tail by the side of the backbone. Now, with a terrific sweep of the knife, it is brought alongside the vertebræ and right out through the cranium. This splits the fish in half, and it is now thrown open, the inside is scraped away, and the fish is packed—athwart and across in

large puncheons, with a layer of salt between them. Thus they remain till required for shipment, which will be when the schooner calls for them at the mouth of the river. This she does periodically. When this time arrives the fish are all taken out, and as much of the salt scraped or wiped from them as possible, and a pickle is prepared of salt, saltpetre, and sugar. The fish is then carefully repacked, and the pickle poured over; then they are headed up, and the casks are ready. If properly prepared before cooking, these pickled salmon are almost equal to the fresh caught fish—at least, so say competent judges.

It is a fact of no ordinary weight, in relation to the natural history of salmon, that, notwithstanding the large number of fish opened, no trace of food was found in any one case. This the writer can vouch for. Moreover, on inquiry amongst the Indians and the Canadians, none of them could say that they had ever taken food from the salmon's stomach when taken in fresh water. It is true that, on one occasion, three little fish termed keplins were thrown up by a salmon, but this was caught in the salt water of the lower Gulf. These facts go most materially to prove that the salmon does not feed in fresh water normally, though it has been seen to jump for a dragon-fly; and many fish were killed by the imitation of this insect on the Natashquan both in 1880 and 1881.

One peculiarity of these Canadian rivers is the shifting nature of the sand-banks, and the consequent alteration in the position of the pools. One camps on a sand-bar, with a hundred yards to spare of high and dry sand on either side; the fires are lighted with green boughs well piled, and at ten o'clock all things are snug, and you prepare to turn in. Presently the thunder blasts out, the rain descends (not in showers, but in actual torrents), and the lightning gleams, and actually seems to pour in a liquid flood of blue light along the pathway of the rain. In the midst of it all the tents must be struck, and we must away to safer *terra firma*, for the sand-bar is shifting rapidly. By morning no sand-bar is visible, and where it stood the night before a boiling torrent rushes at the rate of an express train, and there are, perhaps, sixty feet of water.

The fishable length of the Natashquan is about forty miles in a good season, when water is plentiful, and further up than this the white man has probably not penetrated. It is in these regions that the constant forest fires break out, causing devastation amongst the forest giants, and even loss of life. It is not

at all an uncommon occurrence to find that the river is clouded over with smoke, slowly drifting with the wind, from some gigantic conflagration perhaps five hundred miles off. These terrible balefires are, however, most frequent on that 'dread and silent' river the Saquenay, causing great loss of property, which, though not apparently, is, nevertheless, from its magnitude, really, of extreme value.

In an article on salmon fishing in these regions just one remark—albeit, valedictory—must be made in reference to that pest of all the Canadian rivers—the flies. It is a remarkable fact that the more salmon there are the greater the pest of mosquitoes, sand-flies, &c.; and as the fish work their ways to the upper parts of the river, the flies seem to follow. And what pests! Tobacco they positively revel in, and only the blinding smoke of green fir boughs seems to dispel their myriad presence. It is an extremely salutary exercise of patience to find a mosquito busily sawing his proboscis into you just as you have risen to hook a fish, and both hands are engaged. That man is a Stoic who forbears uttering curses (not loud, but deep) when he finds that he has lost his fish because he removed one hand from the rod's butt to crush the tiny tormentor. Yet there is no remedy.

TRANSATLANTIC NOMENCLATURE.

By 'UNCLE SAM.'

THE question of nomenclature is, and always has been, an interesting and important theme to horsemen, and many curious examples occur from time to time which are frequently lost for want of a timely note of them. I have a long standing acquaintance with one of the principal breeders and owners on this side, and visiting at his house a few weeks since, I managed to introduce the topic, which resulted in a conversation from which a considerable portion of the following information was gleaned.

Pierre Lorillard was one of the first men on this side of the Atlantic who really made nomenclature a study, and took a genuine pleasure in digging out an appropriate name. He set all his friends to work thinking up names; they, in their turn, induced their friends to do likewise, until at last the popular

owner was deluged with suggestions from every one who had ever heard him mentioned. At length he sought refuge in solitude, and finally evolved his system of Indian naming—*i.e.*, Iroquois, Sachem, Powhattan, &c.; but his good humour was severely tested when the irrepressible Larry Jerome suggested that a certain colt, with a most forbidding countenance, should be called Scar-faced Charlie.

One of our prominent owners, D. D. Withers, seldom names his horses until late in life, sometimes not at all. Thus they run their first season as 'bay colt by Kinglike—Fan Fan,' and next season the Fan Fan colt develops into Monarchical, and, being unrecognised, puzzles and confounds the sages of track and ring. Colonel Tom Ochiltree is a well-known figure in New York, and years ago was engaged to a lady whom I will call Miss Woodford. A mutual friend who owned a horse ranche, wishing to compliment both groom and lady, christened a colt Tom Ochiltree, and a filly Miss Woodford, and every one was pleased. Time passed along; they both turned out well, until at three years the colt went to the stud, and by a curious coincidence, received a visit from the filly, Miss Woodford. The offspring was appropriately named Texan Ranger, after the Colonel's war experiences. In the meantime the marriage fell through, and Miss Woodford (the lady) married another swain. When the entry lists recorded 'br. c., Texan Ranger, by Tom Ochiltree, dam Miss Woodford, 2 yrs.,' it became advisable, if not necessary, for the Colonel to take an European trip of a notable length, and it is scarcely safe to mention the subject to-day.

The famous Luke Blackburn was named after an equally famous Kentuckian, who, the first time he saw the colt, could not have felt flattered. The colt, when in repose, was a plain-looking one, undersized, with a large barrel, but when set going he became an equine poem; place a horse in front and he would pass him or die. He was one of the bravest, pluckiest animals ever seen on the turf, and his namesake grew very proud of him. Several years ago L. O. Appleby bought an awkward-looking colt from August Belmont the banker. Appleby had never named a horse before, and he was very difficult to please. One night, in rather a stiff game of poker, he was losing considerably; a 'jack pot' came along, was opened, and all went in but Appleby; he hesitated, holding the seven, eight, nine, ten of hearts, and the deuce of spades. Finally he went in, discarded the deuce, drew the jack of hearts, and won a big

stake on the 'strait flush,' the fourth biggest hand which could possibly have been held under any circumstances.

'That settles it,' he cried. 'I christen the colt Jack of Hearts.'

He did so, and a wonderfully lucky colt he was.

Another curious piece of superstition was in the case of Oriflamme, belonging to the Belmont stable. James Rowe, the trainer, did not like the name, and continually threatened to change it before the colt ran in an important race, but as continually postponed so doing because of the confusion it would cause. Two days before a large stake was run for, in which the colt was entered, Rowe heard Captain Sam Brown casually remark that he had dreamed of a horse, tearing down a track, with two long streaks of flame issuing from its nostrils. Rowe was struck by the coincidence, backed the colt at long odds, won a heavy stake, and Oriflamme the horse is called to-day.

Several years ago news was brought late on New Year's Eve to a well-known owner of that day, that a colt had been born at an hour past midnight, by Champagne out of Cupbearer, and asked him to name it at once. Of course this was important, and the owner, full of the cup that cheers and also inebriates, hiccoughed, 'By Champagne, dam Cupbearer; oh! call the young'un Phiz!' So Phiz was christened, and, as is well known, proved a phenomenal two-year-old.

When Charlemagne was put up for sale, his name was chalked on the blackboard as usual, and finally the auctioneer reached it, and cried, 'I'll sell 'em all out now. How much am I offered for Charley—Charley—Charley—what in thunder is that name? The man who would tack a name like that on a horse ought to be scalped. What is it, Pete?'

'Charley Magney,' said his clerk; and 'Charley Magoney,' went on the auctioneer, cheerfully, 'how much am I offered for Charley Magoney.' Under that name the poor horse was sold, and as Charley Magoney he ever afterwards ran.

August Belmont has a mare named Magnet, who has two fillies, Magnetiser and Magnetic. All three are down with rheumatism, while others of the stud, not gifted with such anti-rheumatic names, are perfectly free from any touch of it.

Appropriate names are plentiful this season. The son of Applause is named Three Cheers; the child of Bullion and Alumina is called Amalgam; the filly Ambulance is said to

blush when her mother's name is mentioned, for the inconsiderate owner saddled her with the chaste cognomen of Black Maria. Strychnine was a steeplechaser, who, always disappointing his backers, was certainly 'poison' to them. He suffered from string-halt in his hind legs; one day his young coloured jockey, named Verplanc, was asked why the horse was not treated for it. The boy said, 'Guess de mass' tinks it helps him over jumps.'

Baldwin the Californian, surnamed the Lucky, calls all his horses by Pacific Slope names—Los Angeles, San Diego, Guadelope, &c. Tournament is by Sir Modred dam by Guinevere. The Quandary colt becomes Uncertainty; and Two Lips, a fast sprinter, is out of Kiss Me Quick. King Ban's progeny are Banbury, Ban Amy, Ban Box, Ban Cloche, and Bandanna. Strathmeath is by Strathmore out of Flower of the Meath, and the son of Pat Molloy and Jersey Lass is Jersey Pat. That magnificent horse Spendthrift, who was sent to England sound in wind and limb, and came back a roarer of the worst kind, has a disreputably named family, who do not, however, live up to their cognomens; they are Defaulter, Spendall, Bankrupt, and Squander.

The son of Enquirer is named Reporter, and his owner, August Belmont, was asked what was the connexion between the two names. He smiled, and said, 'If you don't know, you have never had any experience with reporters.' This horse is a terror, able to win in any race of his age; he runs in and out as it takes his fancy, and is a disgrace to the profession he is named after.


It may be asked, 'What's in a name?' Well, a good deal. A widely known horse was named Gabriel, presumably after the angel of that name. The name took all the angelic matter in him. He was the most 'cussed' brute that ever faced the starter. In fact, he never did face the starter, but insisted in delaying matters until they let him stand wrong end to front. When the flag fell he whirled around, and, if his jockey was still on his back, frequently won with ease. It was said he only won after he had seen a glimpse of the bookmakers' slates and knew what his price was. The last time I saw him he was in the hands of some gamblers down south, who taught him the trick of walking lame whenever his neck was patted. This was very useful after a race at a three days' meeting. Gabriel? Oh, yes! There's a good deal in nomenclature every once in a while, only,

as I said before, it often gets forgotten before any one makes a note of it.

The best joke of this season, however, was in the case of the daughter of Bon Dame by Roysterer, named Devotee. The filly changed hands half a dozen times, and was eventually entered in a maiden race, which she won easily. The Secretary of the Jockey Club was astounded three weeks later to receive the stakes back, accompanied by a note from the very conscientious owner, saying that the money was not rightfully his; he had, since the race, discovered that his fast mare had had a foal the year before, and was therefore not eligible for entry in a *maiden* race. Devotee! Why certainly.

THE KING OF THE PLAIN.

By 'CHAMELEON.'

BOUT fifteen miles south of the line where the Kansas and Colorado Railroad now crosses the Western prairie, stands Fort Wallace, one of the outposts of the old fort line of the Indian Reservation of the United States. About ten years ago Major Markham was in command there, and during my western peregrinations I met him camping out after big game, and accepted his cordial invitation to make the fort my headquarters for a month or two on my return journey to San Francisco.

'There is any amount of room there, my boy,' he said, in his cordial western manner; 'loose boxes for your cattle, a whole suite of rooms for yourself, if you want them, and a billet as long as you have any use for it; visitors are scarce so far west, and when they come across us we treat them well if they are of the right breed.'

When I arrived there, some months later, he fulfilled the invitation to the very letter; everything that the place afforded was at my disposal, and the memory of the two months I spent under his hospitable roof will remain green for many years to come.

One day whilst returning from a ride across the prairie, whither I had been to examine some traps the boys had set and had not themselves had time to inspect, I was overtaken.

by a queer specimen of humanity who was a genuine type of the much-maligned frontiers-man. He was of great height, probably six feet nine or ten, spare in build, but with sinews like twisted steel, betokening enormous strength and endurance; his hair was long and black, and his complexion stained by the sun into a rich brown tan, almost the colour of sealskin in its manufactured state. Across his face was a broad, cruel scar, that shone out white against the dark skin—this, I afterwards learned, was made with the blunt edge of a hatchet in a fight with one of the tribes before they were gathered into the reservations: he had also lost a finger from his left hand.

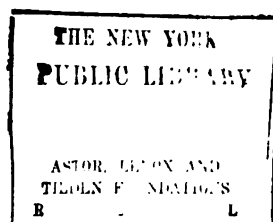
At this time he was riding a magnificent black stallion, whose history he gave me some weeks later when he had learned to know me, for these old denizens of the untrodden prairie tracts are very reserved in their utterances to strangers, and require to know that 'a man is a man' (to use their own phraseology) before they will open the book of their experiences to him. One day I came across him as he was grooming his old favourite, and as he chanced to be in a loquacious mood, I succeeded in drawing from him the following story.

'Jack,' said he, 'is twelve years old, and if I should lose him, there is not another in the whole country to take his place. I was camping out by myself, and having lost my horse in a "buffer" stampede, was footing it from trap to trap, and cache to cache, until I reached the settlements; pretty hard going it was, too, carrying traps, peltries, and everything, and I mostly travelled by night, finding it cooler and pleasanter than by day. It was just before daylight one morning, when I was between the forks of the Platte, and I was too tired to tramp any further, that I rolled myself in my blanket and lay down right in the open. I dropped off to sleep at once, but could not have closed my eyes more than a few minutes when I was aroused by foot-steps around me. I lay still a few seconds to locate the sound, for at that time one's life depended upon coolness and knowledge of prairie tricks, and soon discovered that the tramping proceeded from horses, and wild horses, too. I, therefore, lay still as a mouse waiting for daylight and the chance of a shot that comes to but one man in a thousand—that, too, but once in a lifetime. I had to wait almost an hour, and it seemed an age: gradually, however, the intense darkness that comes before dawn lifted, the stars grew paler and paler, the dark sky became first grey and then melted into blue, and with the growing light



He halted, half turned, and snorted.

A. R. Howell




I saw a spectacle that probably no mortal eyes will see again, for the spread of settlements has destroyed the chances of so doing. I was the centre of a circle about 800 yards in diameter, formed by over two hundred wild horses, each standing in precise order, with heads turned towards me, "nosing" to find out what I was. Most of them were magnificent animals, every toss of the head, every scornful spurn of the earth with the hoof, every snort of curiosity speaking a language of utter freedom from control to which the domesticated animal is a stranger. Nearly all of them had tails that hung down to the ground and manes that lay a long way down on their shoulders; nearly every colour was represented, but bay and sorrel predominated. Their ages probably ranged from the yearling colt up to the ancient of twenty years. I did not dare to rise, knowing that a general stampede would result, but, before the light grew strong, I had rolled over on to my chest and drawn my blanket up to my head, in order to have the best opportunity possible of observing them without revealing myself. We must have remained looking at each other for fully forty minutes, when a jet-black stallion, who was evidently the leader of the herd, threw up his head with a challenge, and, plunging into the air, started off at full gallop, followed by the whole herd in single file. Round and round they went in a circle, manes tossing and tails flying in the wind, making a circus picture unequalled in the history of the world. Six times they ran the ring, decreasing its area every time, until the leader was just in front of me; here he stopped suddenly, ploughing the ground with his hoofs. The circle then broke as if by magic, and the herd wheeled into a long single line, like a company of cavalry at the words "company front." I suppose they were about two hundred yards away, and at first I thought they meant to charge down on me, which would mean either springing to my feet and scaring them away, with only a useless snap-shot for my pains, that might wound or kill one of them without accomplishing my purpose, or, laying still and receiving a kick from every pair of heels that passed over me. It was an uncomfortable state of suspense, and I was delighted when I saw the line move straight towards me, break into gallop, and, still led by the black stallion, wheel to the left, and course over the prairie for nearly a mile. A "tender-foot" would have turned his head to see if they had not gone once and for all, but I knew better, and lay perfectly still, listening to their retreating hoof-beats on the thick grass-

clothed ground. About a mile away the line broke, formed into a triangle with the leader for the apex, and rushed up to within pistol-shot of my feet. Here the leader wheeled out, and the herd passing on either side of me formed a square with the four youngest ones in the centre; still keeping the square formation they galloped off for nearly a mile and then returned in double file. For fully an hour these manœuvres were kept up, marching and countermarching, forming squares, triangles, double files, or breaking into open skirmishing order, again and again returning to the old circle, moving at a hand-gallop around me the greater part of the time, then standing, panting with their exertions, their flanks heaving and necks stretched out as if to discover the meaning of the curious object in their midst without running into any danger in the gratification of their curiosity. In all my varied experiences I had never met with a herd before, but, having heard the old hunters spin yarns about their tactics, knew pretty well every move they were likely to make, and that the chance of getting my desire at last was only a question of patience, as the curiosity of the wild horse is like that of the antelope, which, when once excited, will, notwithstanding their natural timidity, sooner or later lead them just where the knowing hunter wants them, and their constant return to the ring, which ever decreased in size, was the best possible proof of the fact that their curiosity was sufficiently aroused. As they stood for a breathing-spell in the ring they were not more than a hundred yards from me, and their black leader, as usual, had halted right in front of me. His coat was like satin—no grooming could have added to its lustre; his limbs and body were perfection; he carried his head like the king he was, and moved with an easy undulating stride that denoted the speed and bottom of a racehorse. I judged him to be about four years old, just in his prime, and determined if I could not get a fair show for a shot to let him go rather than run the risk of maiming him. You must know, Sir, that just at the back of the head where it joins the neck is a ball of gristle about two inches in diameter, and the favourite trick of the old plains-men was to strike this with a rifle bullet. The ball does not penetrate to any extent, but glances upwards and out through the skin, and the animal drops like a stone, remaining stunned for some minutes, and upon recovering consciousness has only a slight flesh wound and a bad bruise that is all right in a week.

'When the next move was made the leader slowly walked down towards me, and, standing about fifty yards away, threw up his head and whinnied in a coaxing manner, as if asking me to reveal myself. Slowly and steadily every horse moved in, contracting the circle until they stood shoulder to shoulder, and flank to flank, densely packed in a solid circle not one hundred yards in diameter. My heart began to beat quickly, and my fingers itched and twitched as they grasped the stock of my rifle. The show was over, and the decisive moment had arrived; it was the farewell of the herd. As they stood tightly packed together, with the leader a trifle in front, I gripped my rifle with my left hand, and, springing to my feet, threw the blanket into the air behind me. As it floated in the air, the sudden wheel and stampede of the herd forced the leader forward. Surprised out of his fright, he halted, half turned, and snorted, as if accepting a challenge. I slowly moved to the side of him, and as he turned his head I saw the ring of gristle stand out on his neck. Raising my rifle with a swing to my shoulder, I glanced rapidly along the tube, and, with almost a snap-shot, fired. The horse reared in the air, pawed with his fore feet, and fell over backwards, to all appearance dead. I dropped the rifle and in a twinkling had my belt round his hind legs and my suspenders round his fore legs; then I took his head on my knees and waited developments. Presently a tremor and a convulsive twitching of the limbs ran through the prostrate animal, followed by a deep respiration. I leaned over, and as the next breath was drawn breathed heavily into his nostrils. He started and struggled; then I breathed into his nostrils again; and by degrees the agitation subsided. I had my old lariat round his neck, and loosing my suspenders and belt I assisted the horse to rise to his feet, which he at length did, shaking and quivering in every limb, but not struggling to get away. By sundown that night he carried my pack without demur; the next day I rode him, and since then we have never been parted. We have had some tight squeezes together—you can see arrow-marks on his flanks and legs, and marks of claws on his neck—but we always came out on top, and—— Why, no, Sir! Money don't buy that horse, even if he is rising thirteen years, and I didn't think you would have offered it.' And the old fellow turned around to his pet, not understanding that I had asked him more in jest than in earnest, and it was nearly a week before I could convince him of the truth of this. I have often wondered what became of

him and his noble horse, but my long-deferred second visit to the West has not been paid, and my friend Major Markham joined the great majority only two weeks ago.

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.

HE experiences that naturally come to one who has followed intelligently and enthusiastically the pursuit of sport, during a period verging upon half a century, must inevitably abound in interest for all who have kindred sympathies, and for those who are embarking in similar undertakings, will surely possess the added charm of novelty combined with instruction.

These characteristics are to be found in the work by James Henry Corballis, entitled *Forty-five Years of Sport*, which covers not only a period which may be considered the best part of a lifetime, but embraces the following varieties of sport : hunting, shooting, deer-stalking, fishing, falconry, and golf. The conviction is borne in upon the mind of the reader that the author is practically acquainted with the varied subjects with which he deals, whilst the anecdotal and chatty style in which the book is written makes it eminently readable. It is edited by Major A. T. Fisher, late 21st Hussars, and published by Richard Bentley & Son.

The sixth thousand of *Something about Guns and Shooting*, by 'Purple-Heather,' has just been issued by Alexander and Shephard. This speaks well for the popularity of this crisply-written treatise, which, whilst replete with anecdotes, is at the same time practically and scientifically instructive. The chapters devoted to the discussion of suitable game guns are full of interest.



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FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

JUST TOO LATE.

By FINCH MASON.

CHAPTER I.

NED BLAKELY, the jockey, was, for once in his life, in a veritable quandary. He, who had snatched many an important race out of the fire by his quick perception of how things were going with his opponents, and taking an immediate advantage of them accordingly, was now at a complete loss to know what to do. On the one side he had to weigh his own good name, his integrity towards Lord Wilmington—most generous and trusting of employers; on the other, the chances of landing a large sum of money, and, at the same time, saving his own brother from ruin and disgrace.

For days and nights had he thought it over, and at last, after a hard battle, his good angel triumphed, with the result that he had determined when he saw his brother at exercise on the Heath the following morning, he would tell him that the thing couldn't be done at any price.

Ned was fond of money to a degree, and it went sorely against the grain to throw away a chance that only occurs once in a lifetime. But, in the end, his personal regard for Lord Wilmington prevailed over every other feeling.

'No!' he exclaimed, 'I can't do it, dashed if I can! not even for Frank. I shall ride to win, and I'll tell him so before breakfast.'

Full of good resolutions, the jockey got on his hack at an early hour the next morning, and cantered on to the Heath. Arrived there, he was busied riding trials for some little while,

and did not see his brother until he was preparing to start for home again, when he spied him galloping towards him.

‘Well, Ned?’

‘Well, Frank?’

‘Have you thought it well over?’ inquired his brother of the jockey.

‘Yes; and it can’t be done. I say it *can’t* be done, Frank, do you hear?’ was the determined reply. ‘I can’t find it in my heart to play my Lord false, and, what is more, I won’t for you or anyone else. No! win the Derby by all means, if you can, with Blue Ruin—I hope you will, I’m sure, with all my heart; but I shall do my best, you may depend, on Leporello. I have quite made up my mind upon that score, so please say no more to me on the subject.’

His brother’s face assumed a lowering expression as he listened, and it seemed as if he was about to give free vent to his feelings on the subject.

He knew his man though, and was well aware that though he might *lead* him, he was not at all one of those whom he could *drive*. He adopted, therefore, an injured tone, and contented himself with asking the jockey to accompany him home to breakfast, when they could have another talk over the matter, and, at all events, see what could be done towards getting the young trainer out of his present difficulties.

Alas! for Ned Blakely’s strength of mind! Before breakfast was over, the persuasive arguments of his brother, in combination with the tearful entreaties of his pretty young wife, proved more than a match for the jockey’s good resolutions. By the time he had called for his hack to ride homewards, he had not only promised to pull Leporello for the Derby, but had instructed his brother to back Blue Ruin for him to win forty thousand pounds.

When he reached home, he found a note waiting for him from Lord Wilmington’s trainer, in which he said that his noble employer had just wired to say he should be at Newmarket at midday.

The jockey tore the note into pieces, with an oath and an angry stamp of his foot, whilst the colour came and went into his usually pale cheeks, as if a pang of remorse had suddenly seized him.

‘Why couldn’t he have kept away to-day, of all days in the week?’ he exclaimed to himself, with a groan. ‘I shan’t be

able to look him in the face! Oh! why couldn't he have kept away?'

CHAPTER II.

LEPORELLO was favourite for the Derby, the hottest that had been known for years.

The glorious uncertainty of 'The Turf' is proverbial; that very fact, indeed, in all probability, makes it the attraction it is. But the sporting public, for once, seemed utterly to ignore such a contingency in this case, and the money poured in to such an extent to support Leporello from north, south, east, and west, that really it looked as if the colt would be backed against the field at the finish.

Defeat! pooh! such a thing was not to be dreamt of. And, indeed, if there was anything at all in public form, it did look like, what is termed in the vernacular of the racecourse, a real 'good thing' for Lord Wilmington's horse. There was such a rare combination of circumstances, too, in connexion with their idol, that made the race appear a greater 'moral' (as they were pleased to term it) in the eyes of the sporting public than ever. They hugged themselves when they thought of it.

First there was Leporello himself. Had he not retired into winter quarters with an unbeaten certificate, having won all his races during his two-year-old career in the style of a real good horse? Then had he not come out 'like a giant refreshed' this very spring, and won the Guineas—his only engagement prior to the Derby—in the commonest of canters. Then was he not to be ridden by Ned Blakely, the very prince of jockeys, the idol of both prince and peasant; a jockey against whom there had never been so much as a breath of suspicion, and whose integrity was as much admired as his horsemanship. Lastly, was he not owned by Lord Wilmington; a man who never betted a shilling, and who raced for the pure honour and glory of the thing, and, in consequence, was probably one of the most popular noblemen that ever sported colours on a racecourse.

The cheer that goes up from the multitude when something of Lord Wilmington's wins an important race is equally loud, you may depend, whether the winner is favourite or outsider.

Besides Leporello, the only two other horses fancied by the general public were Mosquito, who ran second to the favourite in the Guineas, and who was supposed to have 'come on' considerably since that event, and Blue Ruin, who ran in the name

and colours of a patron of the stable presided over by Frank Blakely, but who, in reality, was the property of the young trainer himself.

He had undoubtedly been backed quietly at long shots by some of the shrewdest people on the Turf, causing sundry persons who, as the saying is, 'did not go about with their eyes shut,' to declare that if Blue Ruin won, more money would be taken out of the Ring than by any other horse in the race.

So quietly had the commission been worked, however, that on the day of the race the colt still remained at the remunerative odds of 25 to 1, with the Ring apparently quite ready to go on at the price.

The reason for this probably was that not only was Blue Ruin in a small and comparatively unknown stable, but, in reality, nothing was known of his real merits—at least, not by the general public. He had only run once before—viz., in the Woodcote Stakes at Epsom, when he was nowhere. The rest of his two-year-old engagements he forfeited, having gone amiss. In the early spring, however, his trainer having got him round, he was put through the mill one fine day with a celebrated handicap horse known to be in good form, with such an astonishing result that his astute connexions were quickly alive to the fact that they had been indeed entertaining an angel unawares all this time.

'With Leporello out of the way, hang him!' thought Frank Blakely, the Derby would be a gift for him. To make 'sicker,' as the 'Red' Cornyn said, he tried his horse again, with the same result as before, only 'more so.' There was a fortune almost within his grasp. His brother was greedy, as far as money was concerned, he was also fond of him, Frank; but whether he would be '*squared*,' as he termed it, was 'another pair of boots.' He determined, however, to try it on, appealing first of all to his pocket, and if that failed, to his feelings. With what result the reader is aware. Needless to say, his unlooked-for success with his brother made Frank Blakely jubilant beyond measure. All that now remained to be done was to secure a good jockey for Blue Ruin, and to get the money on at the long odds before anybody else sniffed the 'good thing' from afar off, and helped themselves.

Both these preliminaries having been satisfactorily arranged, the celebrated jockey, Tom Barber, being specially retained to ride, and the commission being quietly worked by one of the

most knowing men in the Ring, there was nothing more to be done but to get the horse fit and well to the post.

That young Frank Blakely performed this part of the play to perfection, nobody who saw Blue Ruin in the paddock at Epsom on the Derby day could deny. He was indeed trained to the hour, and many a backer of the favourite, after looking him over, walked off to the Ring to 'save' a bit on that outsider of young Frank Blakely's, for he does look so 'thundering well, don't you know.'

A not very fashionable one to look at was Blue Ruin ; but he had rare shoulders and quarters, and was a nice compact horse, being built on purpose apparently for the hilly course he was about to show his mettle over. The favourite, on the contrary, was a beauty to look at in every way. It was hard, indeed, to find a fault with him—conformation, condition—he was perfect in every respect, and his backers were more enthusiastic in his praise than ever. Such a lot of money, in fact, went on at the last moment that very soon went forth the cry from the 'Genii of the Ring' of, '*I'll take odds!*' The starting price, in fact, of Leporello for the Derby of 18— was 2 to 1 *on*.

And now the eighteen runners are at the post, and the feelings of the multitudinous backers of the favourite are somewhat ruffled for the moment by the fact that his jockey has not secured the inside berth, a place he has never failed to secure in former races. They are still further excited when a few moments afterwards the flag falls, by noting that the favourite has got off worst of everything, and is a good last as they toil up the hill. So confident, however, are they in the powers of the horse and the judgment of his pilot that they know no fear—at least, as yet. And when, after what seems a year, the lot are seen streaming down the hill, and the white jacket and geranium cap of Lord Wilmington are seen right in front, how they nudge each other, and exclaim, 'There! what did I tell you? Didn't I say so?' and so on. And they are right ; Leporello is bang in front, but he is right on the outside, and has to make a wide sweep at the corner, whereas Blue Ruin is going along comfortably next the rails, and close to him, his jockey watching Frank Blakely's colt like a cat watching a mouse, is the second in the Guineas—Mosquito. The favourite now comes up hand-over-hand. The trio, in fact, come clear away from their field. It is, indeed, an exciting race.

All this time Ned Blakely is eyeing the two horses just in

front of him with feelings such as cannot possibly be described. His brother's horse he thinks is sure to win, and it will be all right. Another second, and his practised eye notes how strong and well Mosquito is going. He is gaining at every stride, curse him! and is bound to beat Blue Ruin! Oh, what a mistake it has been all along. Gnashing his teeth with vexation, he sets to work in real earnest. Such an effort was surely never made before by living jockey. A splendid effort both on the part of horse and man; but unfortunately it came just a moment too late. He succeeded in beating his brother's horse by a neck, and was in turn beaten by a short head by the despised Mosquito. If it had been but half-a-dozen yards further Leporello must have won.

It was an awful sell, of course, and the backers of the favourite, after the race, might well look blue. Such a reversal of public form was extraordinary, to say the least. Their horse was certainly very unfortunate—bad start, couldn't get through his horses, &c.—every excuse, in fact, but the right one. And, said they, how Mosquito must have 'come on' since the Two Thousand! They slightly modified their opinions when they saw Leporello, giving the former weight, canter away from him a fortnight later on at Ascot as if he had been a common hack.

'Oh!' they groaned, 'he ought to have won the Derby easily, easily!' And so he ought.

A LONG STOP.

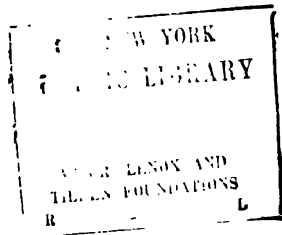
By SOMERVILLE GIBNEY.

I WAS an engaged man, but was I a happy one? I ought to have been, but was I? If I had asked myself the question at the time I should most probably have answered in the affirmative, but as I now calmly and quietly look back on that period I do not feel so sure. The fact is I was engaged 'with a purpose,' if such an expression is allowable, and to make this clear I am afraid I must be somewhat egotistical, not from choice but necessity. So here goes.

I was a good cricketer, not exactly up to 'Gentlemen and Players' form, and yet in my 'Varsity eleven as one of the last choices. I had made my century on several occasions, and, in



Just too late



addition, was a fair change bowler, besides being able to take the gloves if there were no one better in the eleven. Consequently when it was decided in our county (Fenshire) to form a county club, hunt up available talent, get together a representative eleven, and enter the arena of county cricket, I was one of the first men applied to. I loved the game heart and soul, and so it will be readily understood I entered into the project *con amore*. The idea had not originated with me, but with Markham Raby, the Squire of Brantworth, a small village about three miles distant from the county town of Lingham, where I was supposed to be serving my articles, but which, to be more truthful, served me as a *locus standi* from which to journey to cricket matches in the summer, and, in a modest way, to hunt in the winter. For I had some money of my own, enough to enjoy myself as a bachelor, or to marry on if I lived quietly.

Markham Raby, being a man well on in the fifties, had given up playing himself, but though not actively participating in it, he had not lost one iota of his adoration of the game. He would go miles to see a good match, and his portly figure and jovial face were not unknown at Lord's and the Oval. He had been a player of a kind in his day, and was never tired of telling how he once hit Tarrant for two threes in one over, when, as one of a local twenty-two, he played against the All-England Eleven. He was a patron of the game in the truest sense of the word, and his great ambition was that his native county of Fenshire should obtain a recognised position in the cricket world.

It was some years after the idea had first occurred to him before he felt it was ripe to be carried out; but the game was making rapid strides both in towns and villages, and he at length thought he saw his way, and laid his project before me. Naturally, as I have said, I entered into it heart and soul, and being near neighbours we saw a good deal of each other. I often went over to dine and stay the night at Brantworth, when, after the ladies (for there were ladies) had retired, I and the Squire talked business over our pipes in the smoking-room until the small hours.

The ladies consisted of his wife, a mild little nonentity, and his daughter Emma, a young lady of two-and-twenty, with plenty of character and a strong will of her own, and, added to these, almost as much knowledge of cricket as her father. She knew the game better than any woman I have ever met, that is

theoretically, and if nature had only made her a man I have little doubt that her name would have figured yearly among the first-class averages. She had a certain amount of beauty, and this, coupled with the interest she took in my favourite sport, and the help she gave her father and myself in maturing and working out our project, attracted me, and, to cut a long story short, we became engaged.

However delightful it may be to discover a real knowledge of, and interest in cricket in a young lady, still in your *inamorata* you require something more than that; and it has a chilling effect when you are desirous of a little quiet spooning to be recalled suddenly to the everyday world by a remark about averages, or a query as to the latest doings of Hornby or Grace. Nevertheless, I regarded myself as an exceptionally fortunate fellow—for Emma had money of her own—and told myself I was very happy.

And so matters went on. The club was formed, an eleven got together, and our first match with a neighbouring county played—and won. But even that was not all delight to me, for when I got out with only six to my credit I came in for such a severe wiggling from Emma that I felt remarkably small.

‘Frank, I’m positively ashamed of you!’ she said, as I approached her in the tent, having laid aside my pads and bat. ‘What an example to set the others! What could you have been thinking of to play forward at that? Why, a child would have known better! I could see all along he was tempting you further and further every ball, but I never thought you would have been silly enough to fall into the trap. I’m disgusted with you!’

‘Well, Emma, everyone is liable to make mistakes at times,’ I ventured to remark.

‘Mistakes?—nonsense! There was no excuse for a mistake in this case. It was pure folly, nothing else. Now, to-morrow, mind, you are to practise for half-an-hour playing forward and back only (Linklater is on the ground, and before we leave I shall give him directions as to the length he is to bowl to you), and then, I trust, I may never see you make such an exhibition of yourself again.’

This was not a pleasant experience in the presence of other ladies, but I had to put up with it, and said nothing. I have only mentioned it with a view of giving some idea of the kind of girl my *fiancée* was.

The County Club was in the middle of its second season when I received a letter from Raby informing me he had been asked by his old friend, Lord Brambleby, to take an Eleven of Gentlemen over to Brambleby Towers to play a two-day match against a team he (Lord Brambleby) was selecting, and asking me to play and act as Captain. His Lordship would put us all up in the house, and there appeared every prospect of a most enjoyable game. The letter further contained a special invitation for me to go over with Emma and her father the day previous to the commencement of the game, and see the place. It is needless to say I sent an immediate acceptance, and when the day arrived found myself driving up to the entrance of the Towers in company with Emma and her father.

The house was a glorious old place, and his Lordship a thorough sportsman of the old school. He welcomed us most heartily, and one could not help feeling at home with him immediately.

That evening, when I came down to the drawing-room dressed for dinner, I received a surprise—I might almost call it a shock—on becoming aware of the presence of Lucy Fenn.

If the truth must be told, I had made this charming young lady's acquaintance during one May term at Cambridge, when, as our tastes were in harmony, we had seen a good deal of each other, and indulged in a short but very violent flirtation. She had come up with the friends of a man I knew, and we made hay while the sun shone, as it fortunately did every day that week. But from the time I bade her good-bye on the Cambridge platform until I met her again at the Towers, I had heard nothing of her, except that her father had died and she was living abroad. The man with whose friends she had been was not communicative.

It was a real pleasure to meet little Lucy again, only tempered by a doubt as to the light in which Emma would regard the matter; for she, I knew, would strongly maintain the fact that I had come to play cricket, not to renew old-acquaintances. I was, therefore, very circumspect in my conduct with regard to Lucy that first evening, and her manner showed she was somewhat surprised and, I fancied, hurt; but I really had to think of myself.

The following morning broke gloriously fine—an ideal cricket day; and the remainder of Raby's team having come over in a

drag and changed, I tossed for innings and lost, and from the spin of that treacherous coin I date my subsequent misfortunes.

Without a moment's hesitation, the Towers Eleven took the innings, and kept at the wickets in spite of all we could do till they had put together 213.

I *couldn't* bowl that day. If I got the right length I lost direction, and if I gained the latter I lost the former; and added to this, I mulled an easy catch. In my capacity of Captain I was *not* happy, and in that of Emma's accepted I was even less so, when I caught her look as I returned to the tent at the conclusion of the innings. Her glance was black indeed, and it did not brighten when she heard Lucy kindly condoling with me on my ill-luck.

Lunch now took place, and on its conclusion I arranged our order of going in. I put myself down fifth wicket, after talking the matter over with Raby, leaving our safest bats to take the edge off the bowling, after which he considered I should prove more efficacious.

We commenced well. Our first two men played with confidence and judgment, and at the same time piled up runs fast. My spirits rose. It looked as if we were in for a long score. I waited until there was sixty on the telegraph and no wickets down, and then left the tent for a stroll round the gardens. I thought I should thus come more fresh to the game than if I sat watching till my turn came.

I wandered on until I found myself opposite a narrow opening in a thick holly hedge. I went forward to explore, and discovered myself in a narrow, winding path, with dense bushes on either side. Where could it lead to? I must go on and see; and go on I did, winding and twisting till I was utterly lost, for by this time I had left the original path and followed one that branched off it, and another that branched off this second one. Where on earth could I have got to? And then it suddenly flashed across me I was in the famous Brambleby Maze. I had heard of it before, but until this moment I had forgotten all about it. I stood still and roared when the truth dawned on me. It was too absurd to be caught in this way. How I should get chaffed! But no—no one should hear about this; I would find my way out, and then could colour the affair as I liked.

I *would* find my way out. I said this repeatedly as I wandered up this path, and down that, until I was hopelessly

confused. At last an actual feeling of nervousness was stealing over me, when the light through the hedge on my right appeared somewhat brighter. 'Now I'm all right,' I exclaimed, seeing an opening on that side a little ahead. I made for it triumphantly, passed through it, and found myself—not outside, but in the central enclosure. My heart sank to my cricket-shoes, only to spring up again as rapidly on perceiving Lucy Fenn occupying the rustic seat in the middle of the grass plat.

'Oh! Mr. Worsely, I *am* so glad you've come,' she exclaimed, on perceiving me. 'I should never have got out of this horrible place by myself.'

'I'm afraid you've precious little chance of doing so now, if you rely on me,' I replied, 'for I've been wandering round and round for I don't know how long, as it is.'

'My case exactly. What *are* we to do?'

'Talk the matter over first of all,' I said, taking a seat close beside her, as she made room for me.

And we *did* talk, but I can now call to mind that it was *not* about how we were to get out. I know I enjoyed myself, and I think Lucy was happy also. My mind was at ease, for I could just hear the shouts from the cricket-field, and I argued from them that the game was going well for us.

At length, after we had rested about three-quarters of an hour, I said, 'I am afraid I must really be going now, Miss Lucy, I may be wanted.'

'But you won't leave me behind?'

'No, certainly not. We'll go together as far as——'

'Yes, just so—the entrance. I don't think we'll go out together. Lady Starchley, whose companion I am, might not—you understand?'

'Oh, yes, clearly. Some ladies do take such queer notions,' I replied, thinking of Emma, and not feeling quite comfortable. 'If you're ready we'll make a start.'

'Yes, by all means. Come along.'

We might as well have sat where we were for all the good we did. We must have walked miles; up here, down there, round and round, backwards and forwards, only in the end to find ourselves in the centre again, out of breath, very weary, and more hopelessly puzzled than ever.

I was growing desperate. I should surely be wanted soon, and there didn't appear the slightest chance of getting free. I still from time to time could hear the shouts, but somehow they

did not inspire me with that confidence they did at first. Lucy, too, was very anxious to get away. She feared Lady Starchley would be requiring her.

'I tell you what,' she said, at length, 'let us each go different ways. One of us *must* surely get out, and can then come back for the other, leaving marks on the path to show the way.'

'That's a rare good dodge; let's set off,' said I.

We did. Within five minutes we were facing each other again, looking foolish. Again we separated, only to meet again, and a third time the same result took place, and then we gave up the attempt in despair. At this moment I was almost certain I heard my name shouted in the distance, and felt sorely tempted to answer, when I remembered Lady Starchley—and Emma.

'I have another idea,' suddenly exclaimed Lucy; and without waiting for my approval, she put a small whistle to her lips and blew it. The next moment there was a faint answering bark.

'Saved!' she exclaimed, exultingly. 'Whiz will find me.'

'Whiz?'

'Yes, Whiz, my terrier; and once he gets in he will know his way out again.'

'I devoutly hope he may,' I replied, 'for it's our last chance.'

We waited anxiously, Lucy occasionally whistling. The barks were certainly coming nearer, until with a cry of delight a little Yorkshire terrier bounded round a corner, and almost devoured his mistress in his joy at finding her again.

'It's all right now,' said Lucy. 'Hi on, Whiz! Hi on! Good dog! Get along! We're coming! Hi on!'

And Whiz trotted on in front, evidently knowing what was required of him. He was a wonderful cute beast. He never made a mistake, was never at fault, and in a marvellously short space of time brought us to the exit which we had hunted for in vain. We were just going to emerge, when Lucy, who was in front, whispered, 'Here's Miss Raby!'

I waited to hear no more. I confess it, I turned tail and dived again into the intricacies I was just about to leave, until the danger should be past.

In a few minutes I retraced my steps, creeping along like an Indian on the warpath. Where was the opening? Horror! I was lost once more! I was desperate. I tore along round corner after corner, through this opening and that opening, only

at last to find myself once more in the central enclosure, and all the time I could hear my name shouted again and again, and I dare not reply for the sake of—Emma.

I must do something. Again I set off. Ah! what was that? A bark? I whistled. It came nearer, and in a moment or two Whiz was beside me. How I blessed that faithful dog. I could hardly resist holding on to his tail as he trotted in front and at last led me to freedom once more.

I took the precaution to make a circuit of the Towers, and approached the field from the opposite side to that on which the maze lay.

‘Why, Worsely, where the deuce have you been?’ shouted Raby, as soon as he caught sight of me. ‘We’ve been looking for you everywhere. You’ve lost us the game; the last man’s in now.’

‘Last man?’ I gasped. ‘Why there wasn’t a wicket down when I went for a stroll.’

‘They’re all out now except you and those two, and we’re a hundred behind or more. It isn’t cricket.’

‘It is *not* cricket,’ and emerging from the tent came Emma.

‘Where have you been?’

‘Having a stroll,’ with all the ease I could assume.

‘Get your pads on at once. You came to play cricket not to take strolls, I think. We’ll talk about this afterwards.’

This was crushing. My turn came before I had even got my gloves from my bag. And can it be wondered at, that with this prospect before me, I did not trouble the scorer? I was out first ball, and the Raby Eleven were 114 behind and had to follow on.

That evening was a bad one for me. Emma, by some freak of fortune, visited the maze with some of the other guests, and on one of the paths they picked up a handkerchief. *She* recognised it at once, but had the good sense to keep her knowledge to herself—and me. As may have been gathered, she already knew of Lucy’s presence there, and the result was that when we said good night our relations were a good deal strained; Raby, too, was very cool towards me.

The following day I exerted myself to the utmost to repair the mischief already done; but it was no use, and in the end we were beaten by five wickets.

Raby took it tremendously to heart, and was more than cool towards me. Emma was cutting. I went home in the drag

with the others ; Emma and her father went alone in their own carriage.

The following day I received a parcel containing all my presents, and a pocket-handkerchief. But why continue this doleful recital. Let me end more cheerily by stating that if Emma could not rightly appreciate my virtues, Lucy Fenn did.

PUFFS FROM AN OLD PIPE.

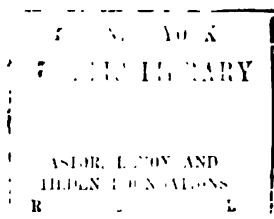
By 'DOOKER.'

BENDED up my last 'puff' by saying that my master accompanied his regiment to Kamptee, and, of course, I went with him. We travelled down from Jubbulpore by that most tedious mode of conveyance, the bullock train, halting during the day and marching by night. The route lay over the Satpura range of hills, and through a most gamey country, where the aromatic but worthless *salai*, the *sal*, the bastard teak, and the *nhowa* trees all flourished amid waving spear grass, whilst at intervals the scene changed to stretches of scrub jungle formed of *butea* trees and *ber* bushes. Jim was comparatively new to shikar, however, in those days, and though whenever a halt was made we used to sally out, no nobler game than a peacock or a hare fell to his gun. The reason was not far to seek. First, it was the cold weather—viz., December—when the jungle and grass were in their full luxuriance. Secondly, ignorance of the most likely spot to find game. Thirdly, that troops were constantly moving up and down, and game within some miles of the high road was thereby considerably harassed. Game there was, however, both abundant and varied within a few miles, for is not the fact chronicled in that most charming book of Indian sport written by Mr. Sterndale, and entitled, *Seonee; or, Camp Life on the Satpura Range*. But we tasted not the delights of shikar, and beyond a snap-shot at a neilghau, and a fleeting glance of some spotted deer, our sport was limited to small game.

At last Kamptee was reached, and having, with two brother ensigns, duly hired a bungalow, Jim began to make preparations to enjoy the sport for which he thirsted—viz., pig-sticking—and to look out for a nag to ride. I shall not tell you of all the animals inspected and tried, but at last a couple were bought at



Where a pig goes a horse must follow.



a price suitable to an ensign's limited purse. Jim's first purchase was a good-looking, milk-white, country-bred pony, who, however, soon got screwed by being jumped over a high thorn fence into a rice field. The result was the development of bog-spavin, and eventual sale of Cupid, as the pony was called. My master was more lucky in his second deal. This was an old Arab, who, after many years' service in the Horse Artillery, was 'cast' for old age. Him Jim named Balloon, from the way he used to soar over every description of fence that volatile young gentleman chose to ride him at. With the game, lean head of his race, and a well set on neck running into unexceptional shoulders, he united clean, flat legs and powerful quarters, and though he would have been the better for an extra back-rib, he could go on all day. I well remember the day Jim first rode him after a hog—a pursuit that eventually became the business of the short span of life that remained to poor old Balloon. The 'sounder' was started on a long range of rocky, scrub-covered hills, and Jim on Balloon got a good start, and, selecting the biggest boar, 'laid in.' Going upon the principle that where a pig goes a horse can follow, Jim stuck religiously to the line, and after scrambling over some desperate break-neck-looking places, at last got on fair terms with the boar, who made straight for a village. Bewildered at the sight of houses, the pig bolted into one, out of which rushed an old lady, scantily clothed, yelling 'blue murder.' Finding his quarters hardly what he expected, the boar bolted out again almost directly, and retraced his steps, and soon after was cornered by Jim at a spot where two high walls met. It was a grand chance of winning the coveted honour of "first spear," but, alas! my master was inexperienced, and as it luckily turned out for him, the boar was not of the fighting order. Pulling Balloon up to a walk (a most fatal mistake, as I subsequently learnt), Jim now approached the animal, and, holding his spear at nearly full length, made several ineffectual prods at him, which were only acknowledged by a gruff grunt as the pumped animal dodged on one side. By this time several other members of the hunt had come up, and Jim's ears were saluted by, 'Now, then, youngster, out of the way,' as one of their best men rode up at a hand-gallop, and drove his spear into the boar. And for this Jim had risked his neck and his horse's legs over fearful ground, only to have the victory snatched from his grasp, and be told he was a 'duffer,' with admonitions 'Not to use his spear like a

fishing-rod!' Let us draw a veil over the tableau. It is a painful one for me to contemplate, even now that many years have sped, and I know the subject is a sore one to my master: Perchance, if he knew I was exposing his weakness, he might not give me the occasional 'fill' that he does for 'auld lang syne!' But the lesson bore good fruit, for never again did Jim commit the fatal mistake of approaching a pig at a walk. Many good days' hog-hunting did I witness after this, and I am glad to add that though Jim could never aspire to be very much in the front rank (you see, he was only a poor penniless ensign, and could not afford very high-class cattle), yet he fairly held his own.

How jolly those old hog-hunting days were! As the embers of glowing tobacco burn within me, I see faces in the fire which bring back many jovial nights and amusing anecdotes—and yet they are tinged with sorrow, for how many of those who gathered round the camp-fire are now gone to their long rest? But life is short, and useless regrets are vain. Let me, however, try and conjure up from the shadowy past some of the anecdotes that impressed themselves on my memory.

I remember so well one night when we spent our Christmas at a place we will call Rumnahpore. It had been a good day; some eight or nine pigs had been accounted for, and as every one gathered round the blazing wood fire in front of the mess tent after dinner, conversation naturally turned on hunting at home. What yarns were spun! How the merits of different packs were discussed, and that great problem—the scent of the fox, argued, it is unnecessary for me to enlarge on. Then anecdotes became the order of the day. Of course, as I am but a pipe, I cannot recall them all; but one or two imprinted themselves on my memory. These I give as I remember them, where they originally came from I know not, and to their unknown authors I must apologise for not quoting their names, but I believe they are true. Here is the first:—

In a certain well-known Hunt there was a man who was in the habit of constantly over-riding hounds, and on one bad scenting day this person had come blundering right into the middle of the pack at a very critical moment. I must premise by saying that the individual in question had a club-foot and a withered leg, which gave him a somewhat peculiar appearance. When he committed the unpardonable offence of jumping on hounds, the wrath of old Harry, the huntsman, was fully roused. He felt inclined to swear, but did not. He only shook his whip at

the offender, and said, 'Ah, Mr. —, I wish to goodness you was a 'ound !'

His remark was heard, as it was intended it should be, and Mr. —, in a perky tone, replied, 'Oh, do you, Harry! What would you do if I were?'

'Do?' rejoined the incensed huntsman; 'do?' Why I'd first give you a d——d good double-thonging,' and then he added with a look of withering scorn at Mr. —'s attenuated and deformed limb, 'and *with such legs and feet on ye, ye should never hunt a fox, but be drafted as a drag-hound!*'

The other story runs thus:—Tom — was huntsman to a very crack pack, but one which, like most others, was troubled by the presence of sundry pursuers who knew very little really about hunting or its mysteries. Tom — was a man of urbane manners, but caustic speech, and his life was at times made a burden to him by the advice of sundry well-intentioned members of his field, who thought they could assist him in moments of difficulty by various suggestions as to where the fox had gone. One day Tom had hunted his fox with a cold scent very patiently for some four miles, when, on arriving at a small covert into which hounds carried a line, but in which they could not speak to it, his spirits were revived by a ringing halloa at the far end. Galloping to it, Tom found Mr. —, a worthy local tradesman, in a frantic state of excitement.

'Where did you see him, sir?' queried Tom.

'See him!' was the reply. 'I ain't seen him; but I can *smell* him. Can't you?'

A look of ineffable contempt came over the huntsman's face, then his good-nature re-asserted itself, and he said, 'No, sir, I can't; but if *you can*, all I can say is that if you was a 'ound I'd advise master to give two hundred guineas for you, if only to breed from.'

One more story, and, then, *revenons à nos moutons* or rather *à nos cochons*, for pig must play the most prominent part of this portion of my reminiscences.

'Sam'—I don't know if he really possessed another name, for by this he was always spoken of and alluded to in hunting circles—was huntsman to a certain noble lord. The said noble lord had one day given Sam instructions to call on a non-fox-hunting farmer with regard to some preposterous claim he had sent in, and endeavour to smooth him over. The next day his lordship interrogated Sam as to the success of his mission by inquiring,

'Well, Sam, and how did you find Mr. —?'

'Oh! as drunk as a lord, my lord,' rejoined Sam, with a rap of his hat, then realising his *faux pas*, he added, with a meaning look, 'Oh! I beg pardon, my lord!'

Tableau.

And now we really must get back to the pig again. I don't know that I have very much to relate that has not been written before. But it is a glorious sport. *The very best*, in my humble opinion, though as I am a mere pipe that may be worth very little; but yet I have seen better fun, and more exciting incidents at pigsticking, and have met with more real comradeship in that sport than in any other. There is undoubtedly something very entrancing in its surroundings: the camp life, the meet, the tension whilst a patch of covert is being beaten, the glorious burst, and the final dual *à outrance* with an old grey boar, that must commend itself even to the most lethargic temperament. Perhaps I have imbibed some of my enthusiasm from my master, but I have seen the game of sport played pretty well all round and, *as a pipe*, I swear by pigsticking.

I am not going to weary you with an account of all the pigs I have seen killed, and they are a good few—for in the meantime my master had increased his stud, and attended most of the meets regularly—but I cannot help telling you one rather absurd incident I witnessed. A pig was being ridden in some long grass, and speared before its sex could be distinguished. Then it turned to bay and charged everyone most pluckily several times. At last one sportsman rammed his spear into the almost dying sow (for such it proved to be). The spear stuck and as the pig sunk back in the agonies of death, she seized her foe's foot in her mouth, and made her teeth meet. I shall never forget C——'s face, whilst he cursed the pig and all her ancestors, as he tugged and tugged to get rid of the porcine syren's embrace! The whole scene was so ludicrous that everyone was in fits of laughter as C—— had to part company with his horse, and tumble on to the pig, which shortly after expired. It was a three months' job for C——, however, as his foot and boot had been bitten clean through.

One feat of Jim's I must record, as it will show that he improved as a spear. He and two others had been riding an active young boar over a very bad bit of black-cotton ground, and Jim's mount—a brute of a Persian, which I always hated, as he was such a headstrong animal, with no more mouth than

a bull—had given him a rattling fall. Both the other men had had a shy at the boar, but missed their spears when we came up, and, irritated I suppose, the boar charged straight at Jim on his bridle-hand side. It was an awkward moment, but my master was equal to the occasion, and meeting the boar's rush over-hand, dropped him dead with one spear delivered just where the neck joins the shoulder. He was proud of the performance, and so am I in being able to record it.

I remember once when we were out, one of the party came down at a nullah hidden in some long grass, and his horse—a valuable Arab—got away from him, and made straight for a heavy belt of jungle some two miles distant, with his master toiling along in helpless pursuit. All that day did a couple of syces follow the runaway, but in vain, for after tracking him for some distance he was lost among some rocky ground, where all foot-prints vanished. A week after the owner heard from a civilian, who was out in camp forty miles distant, that his horse had come into his camp one evening with saddle and bridle on, and presenting the appearance of a bag of bones. The saddle had been scratched and torn to bits, the reins broken, and the horse's mouth and withers were festering from fly-blown sores. He got round in time to a certain extent, but was never worth anything as a hunter subsequently.

One of the most curious places in which we used to find pig was the *pān* gardens. *Pān* is a sort of vine, the leaves of which are used by natives to wrap the *betul* nut and lime, which they are so fond of chewing, and these *pān* fields much resemble a hop-garden, only that all the sides of the fields, as well as the top of the poles, are covered up by mats to exclude the light. The ground also is kept moist by constant irrigation, thus affording a cool and shady retreat for a sybarite pig. It used to be curious to see a great, whacking boar, when he found his quarters untenable, come bursting out through the matting, blinking in the sunlight, and then lay himself out to gain the next harbour of refuge. We used to have many a good run from these *pān* gardens, and on a hot day they used to be almost a certain find.

The small game shooting near Kamptee was not very first rate, but Jim was an indefatigable sportsman, and every day that was not devoted to pig-sticking he used to be off somewhere, and generally came home with a few couple of quail, some painted partridges—there were none of those sporting birds, the black partridge, so far south—and a few hares. The snipe

shooting, owing to the absence of *jheels*, was not good, and, if I remember aright, the best bag was twenty-six and a-half couples, four grey duck, two teal, and three 'cotton' teal, made one day by Jim and a friend of his in the Horse Artillery. They had to work hard, however, for starting before daylight, they rode out some twenty-five miles, shot all day, and got back in time for mess at eight p.m.

I wish I could relate some of the larks that used to go on at the said mess; but we pipes were tabooed within its sacred precincts—except the billiard-room—and only those nasty cigars allowed, so I am afraid I cannot tell you much about what went on there.

A ten days' meet in March saw the last of the pig-sticking, and then Jim and a brother officer, who had obtained two months' leave, determined to spend them in the tiger and bison-haunted jungles of Chanda, and see what they could produce in the shape of big game. But of our adventures there more anon. The tobacco in my bowl has burnt out, and without that fragrant incentive I can no more collect my thoughts than men can. I must therefore delay future shikar experiences to a later date.

THE DARLEY ARABIAN.

By H. H.

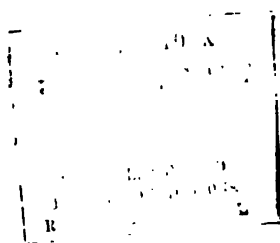


VERY early indeed in the eighteenth century there was landed on the shores of England a horse destined to exercise more influence on our thoroughbreds generally, than any other horse which has appeared in the British Islands. He was a young bay Arabian, sent home by Mr. Darley, a merchant at Aleppo, to his father in Yorkshire, and hence has been handed down to fame as the Darley Arabian. At first I do not suppose that he attracted any particular attention beyond that bestowed on other so-called Arabians or Barbs, as most foreign horses coming to England were at that time called (and a great many of these did come at that period), for it is on record that very few good thoroughbred mares came to his paddocks besides Mr. Darley's own, and he had only the dam of Almanzor, and Aleppo, that was really of good quality. His young bay, as will presently be seen, however, must have possessed much purer blood than any



"I aint seen him, but I can smell him."

Chas. H. Bradley



of his compeers, or, at any rate, have nicked considerably better with the blood that was already in the country, seeing that at the present time all the cream of the English thoroughbreds can trace their descent to him either by sire or dam, and the only horses which could at all pretend to rival him, viz., the Byerley Turk, or the Godolphin Arabian, are being left far in the rear, both as regards winners descended directly from them, and the number of fashionable sires in male descent that they can boast of at the stud.

While living in a semi-neglected state at his Yorkshire paddocks—very different, indeed, from his descendants St. Simon, Bend Or, or the late Hermit, not to go back to Stockwell—there chanced to come to the stud farm, some time in 1714, the mare Betty Leedes, an animal of pure Eastern descent, and from that time his fame was assured, as from the alliance of the pair sprung the far-famed Flying Childers, the property of Mr. Leonard Childers, but soon to be in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire. Up to that date no horse had appeared on the turf which could at all compare with the performances of Childers, who literally ran away from everything that opposed him, whether in races or trials, and beat a horse called Fox at least a quarter of a mile over the Beacon course. I will not go into all the details of his time tests, because we know they are so fallacious even now, with much better means and appliances for taking them than they had in his day, and the most that can be said for them is that they were fairly consistent one with another, and with the times of other really good horses, which admits them to some amount of credence. They make him not much worse, and certainly not better, than really good horses of the last fifty years, over a distance of ground, and he was never tried any other, so that we may put down this little Eastern-bred gentleman as a horse considerably in advance of his own time on the race ground.

He was not, however, such a success as a sire as might have been expected, and now has no male representative at the stud, although the blood of the daughters of Snap, a grandson of his, flowed in the veins of nearly every good horse at the end of the last century, and has consequently come down in varied streams to the present day. However, there was another son, Bartlett's Childers, who was never trained owing to an accident, and from him the Darley Arabian blood has been handed down to the present day in the male line. He was also, it was

asserted, a son of Betty Leedes, although that has been doubted by some, who, however, never found him another dam even in their imaginations, so that Betty Leedes has become the accepted one in spite of them. He begot a horse called Squirt, who, in his turn, was the sire of Marske, whose union with Spilletta produced Eclipse. Here, however, we must pause to note that this pedigree is not without a doubt, as John Lawrence, supposed to be a great authority in his day, and other old writers, contend that a horse called Shakespeare shared the chance of paternity with Marske. This, however, would still take us back to the Darley Arabian, although in a different line, as he was by Hobgoblin, the most celebrated horse of his day, and the son of Aleppo, before mentioned as the brother of Almanzor, and son of the Darley Arabian; and he had another strain of the blood through his dam, the Little Hartley mare, by Bartlett's Childers. However, although Shakespeare was a chestnut and Eclipse also a chestnut, while Marske, his other sire (if I may use the term), was a brown, the stud-book assigns Marske as the actual sire of Eclipse, although old Mr. Tattersall has left it as his opinion that he should be placed to the credit of Shakespeare.

He was, like Childers, not only the horse of his day, but probably the equal of most that have appeared since, although Smith, who trained both him and his grandson Skyscraper, is said to have averred that the latter was the best horse of the two, and he should be allowed to know. At any rate, Col. O'Kelly's white-legged chestnut treated all his opponents quite as cavalierly as Childers had done before him, not only beating, but running right away from them. It will be observed that there were no handicaps and no ring in those unsophisticated days, or matters would, perhaps, have been different. The only horse supposed to be at all equal to Eclipse was Goldfinder, a son of Snap, who also beat everything he ever ran against; but it chanced that the two never met, so that Eclipse retired to stud life without being opposed by anything that could make him gallop.

Before going farther, I must just say another line from Childers was that of Blaze, who sired Samson, the best horse of his time, and he got Engineer and Bay Malton, the latter the best of his day, and conqueror of the noted King Herod. Herod of the Byerley Turks line, and his son, Highflyer, as well as Matchem, grandson of the Godolphin Arabian, were the

great rivals, in stud fame, of Eclipse. Matchem is said to have run the Beacon course in less time than Childers, although he was not always successful. Here it should be also observed that old-fashioned sportsmen considered the stock both of Herod and Matchem as stouter than that of Snap or Eclipse, though the Darley Arabian's descendants were allowed to have great speed. I must also return to the Flying Childers to note that his grandson, Samson (supposed to have been out of a half-bred mare, although he has a thoroughbred daughter of Hip assigned him in the stud-book as his mother), was the sire of the original Shales, the great founder of the modern race of hackneys, and all the best-bred ones of the present day trace back to him; others of Childers' descendants also exercised great influence on hunting and half-bred stock generally.

Now, to return to Eclipse, as it is through him alone that the Darley Arabian affects our blood horses, seeing that Sweetbrier's blood, another descendant of Bartlett's Childers, who got some good horses in his day, has been allowed to die out, as has that of Ruler and Shuttle, two sons of young Marske, who got good runners, but both are represented, although not very strongly, in the female line. Eclipse had a very numerous progeny, but it is enough for us to note Joe Andrews, King Fergus, Mercury, and Waxy, as they alone appear in the sires of the present day; indeed, we may say that Mercury has dropped out, more is the pity, although his blood is still very potent in the female line, as is that of Alexander, another son, while Vertumnus, Soldier, Dungannon, Brush, Bourbon, &c., appear far less frequently.

We will commence with Joe Andrews, whose blood runs through Dick Andrews, Tramp, Lottery, Sheet Anchor, Weatherbit, to Beadsman, who did the late Sir Joseph Hawley such good service at the stud, besides winning him the Derby. Rosicrucian and his descendants, with those of The Palmer, now principally uphold the honour of this family, and I fear have scarcely kept up their character for stoutness which they once possessed, although Tyrant, by Beauclerk—one of the latest additions to the stud—does not leave much to be desired in that way. I may add Althotos and Beauclerk, with Reveller by Brown Bread, and Luminary and Selby, sons of Beauclerk, are now at the stud of this line. The Liverpool line from Tramp in Lanercost, Van Tromp, and Loup Garou, with its grand stoutness is, I fear, lost beyond recovery, unless Cameleon, son

of Colsterdale, does something to help it in his old age. Both of these families have been much helped by fresh infusions of Darley Arabian blood on the female side. Lottery, by Lottery, will keep it alive as long as sport lasts, as one of the best steeplechasers ever saddled (*the* best in early days), and little Chilblain, still alive (a sadly neglected sire), small as he was, could win over a country under 13 st. 7 lb., and leave some of the best of his time behind him. The family generally are rather eccentric in temper, and I think this may account for want of stoutness in their progeny, and some of them are exceedingly handsome—Rosicrucian, for instance. Blue Gown was about the best, but was sent abroad, and died on board ship. We next come to King Fergus, who begot Hambletonian and Beningborough, and as the latter is the shortest, we will take that line first. The readers of *Fores'* know all about Orville, so I may say that the breed held its own through Emilius to Plenipotentiary, who won the Derby, and was supposed to be one of the best horses ever foaled, but was injured either by jumping off a high footpath, or was nobbled just before the Leger, and virtually ruined; Priam, who won the Derby and had a great Cup career, and other good horses, but none of them were able to reproduce their own excellence as regards horses. Priam's mares, however, were wonders, amongst them being the mighty Crucifix. Almost the last of any note of Orville's descendants was the game pony, The Lamb (half-bred), twice winner of the Liverpool, who was by Zouave, by Bantam, a son of Euclid, by Emilius. I could write pages concerning hunters of this blood, but space does not allow. Another Orville family, formerly held in high repute, was that of Muley Moloch, which came down to Little Wonder, who won the Derby in 1840, but has not made much show in the sire list for many years now. The blood of famous old Alice Hawthorn, daughter of Muley Moloch, runs, however, in many good sires in the distaff side, notably Bend Or and his son Ormonde. Coming to the Hambletonian we find Whitelock, Blacklock, Voltaire, Voltigeur, Vedette, Speculem, Galopin, St. Simon, Donovan.

I am well nigh inclined to leave this galaxy of names to speak for themselves, for what can add to their lustre? I must, however, say that the Blacklocks have been especially noted across country, as Brutandorf begat Gaylad, the celebrated Lincolnshire horse that shared the honour of early steeple-

chasing with Lottery. Another wonder was Globule, by The Cure, and now we have Why Not, by Castlereagh, who has generally found himself at the top of the handicap. Like that of Tramp, this blood has been strongly fortified all down the line, on the female side, from Blacklock himself to Donovan ; in fact, quite the lion's share of his dam's blood comes from Touchstone, Birdcatcher, &c. Turning to Waxy, who got a double dose through his dam, Maria, by Herod, out of Lisitte, by Snap, who had two lines of the Darley Arabian blood herself, independently of Herod's through Cyprian, we find the head of two wonderful families—indeed, I may say three—as he sired both Whalebone and Whisker, not to mention Woful, and all the wonderful daughters of Penelope. We will, for convenience, take Whisker first, and trace him through his son Economist to Harkaway, who was the sire of King Tom, a marvellous sire of mares, and he is now represented by King Lud and his son King Monmouth, both rare stayers, and Umpire, who begot Come Away, winner of the Grand National in 1891. St. Angelo, the dam of St. Simon, is also a daughter of King Tom, so that the blood comes into some of our best families. Whalebone himself is answerable for two famous lines—the Touchstone, through Camel, and the Sir Hercules. Touchstone was much inbred through his dam, Banter, a daughter of Master Henry, by Orville, and he begot Orlando, the sire of Teddington, also inbred to the Gohanna line to be mentioned further on, and perhaps best known as the sire of Lord Coventry's two Liverpool winners, Emblem and Emblematic ; but Touchstone's fame at present rests more on the Newminsters than the Orlandos, although many are the good horses the latter has sired. Newminster, the Leger winner of 1851, a son of old Beeswing, begot Lord Clifden, a Leger winner like himself, and was, moreover, the sire of Wenlock, who already has some good representatives at the stud, as has Petrarch, another worthy son of his, both with Whalebone blood on the dam's side, and he is father also of Hampton, quite one of the sires of the day, and the still more famous Hermit, who, perhaps, earned more money than any other sire known. He has so many to take his place at the stud, that it would be invidious to particularise any of them, although I may mention St. Blaise, and his great success in America. He, like his sire, won the Derby, but was suffered to leave our shores at a small sum, and has since made 20,000*l.*, and sired the best stock on the Western Continent.

The Newminster line is well known in cross-country annals through Scotsguard and Ascetic, whose jumpers are famous even in Ireland. Sir Hercules gets two lines of Eclipse, one from Whalebone, his sire, and the other through his dam, Peri, by Wanderer, a son of Gohanna, by Mercury, a very stout line, so his great influence on the turf through Irish Birdcatcher is easily accounted for. Birdcatcher begot The Baron and his brother, Faugh-a-ballagh, who, however, we have not space to notice; and The Baron was the sire of Stockwell and Rataplan, from Pocohontas, who got another strain of the blood through Glencoe, out of sister to Tramp, and two from her dam, Marpessa, by Muley, who was by Orville, out of Eleanor, by Whiskey, by Saltram, by Eclipse, out of Clare, a daughter of Marmion, by Whiskey, so that the Stockwell family is full of the blood, and also gets a line of Blacklock through Miss Pratt, the dam of Echidna.

Stockwell's family, like Hermit's, is almost too numerous to mention, but we may recall St. Albans, sire of Springfield, Lord Lyon, sire of Minting, Blair Athol, sire of Doncaster, who in his turn begot Bend Or, sire of Ormonde, and Muncaster, sire of Saraband. His brother, Rataplan, has also worthily carried on the fame of the race as sire of Kettledrum, a Derby winner, and grandsire of the noted Bendigo, quite the champion miler and weight-carrier of modern times. Moreover, his daughters, Mineral, and Lady Langden have been quite the queen-mothers of the stud of recent years. Neither must it be forgotten that Wisdom is his grandson through Blinkhoolie. I had omitted also to say that in siring Discount and Brunette—the latter the best mare ever bred in Ireland, and a flier over a natural country—Sir Hercules established a wonderful fame as a hunter-getter, which Irish Bird-catcher carried on, as did Faugh-a-ballagh.

There are others also which we must leave our readers to look up for themselves. Birdcatcher's other line comes through Oxford, Sterling, and his son Isonomy, and the two between them own as many famous horses now at the stud as either of the other lines mentioned, the latest being Common, winner of last year's Derby, St. Leger, and Two Thousand, who is much inbred to Touchstone, through Thistle, by Scottish Chief, from another famous Touchstone family. I must, however, refrain from saying more on the subject, save that the descendants in male line direct of the Darley Arabian have won the Derby, Oaks, and St. Leger considerably more than half the times they

have ever been contested, and consequently contrast favourably in that respect with either the Godolphin Arabian or the Byerley Turk. I have only been able to glance at the subject most superficially, but my readers who know their stud-book can fill in for themselves the omissions for which there was not space in this article. Up to the present time of writing a couple of great races have fallen to descendants of the Darley Arabian—viz., the Lincoln Handicap to Clarence, by Saraband, and the Brocklesby to Minting Queen, by Minting.

A RISKY REMEDY.

By the Author of 'Racing for Gold,' &c.

WHAT on earth is the matter?' I asked Allan Ramsay, as he rushed into my room one morning in the second week of June.

'There is the devil to pay!' he answered; 'that infernal old thief, Isaacs, won't renew my bills!'

'Not even at sixty per cent.?'

'Not at any price!'

'What reason does he give?'

'None at all.'

'Can't you get discount elsewhere?'

'No, nowhere; the word has gone round that I am at the end of my tether; these fellows hang together like a lot of Sicilian bandits.'

'That is awkward just now. Is the amount large?'

'I owe more than three thousand! It means ruin.'

'Would not her father help you?'

'He would be delighted to hear of the smash, as it would break off the marriage, to which he has always objected; the mother is, however, in our favour.'

'There is something about this I don't quite understand. You are about to marry an heiress, and yet the Jews refuse to renew your bills.'

'Of course, there is some scoundrel in the background who would benefit by my fall, and who would then try to marry Ella.'

'Do you suspect any one?'

'The only man I can think of is Willyard, the blackguard I refused to shake hands with at the club.'

‘But why did you put that insult on him?’

‘I thought you knew the story. When my old schoolfellow, Captain Gray, was ordered to India, he could not—on account of her delicate health—take his wife with him, and he left her in charge of Willyard, his most intimate friend. Willyard abused the trust reposed in him, and took a mean advantage of the lady. She bitterly regretted what had taken place, and wrote immediately to her husband, acquainting him with the fact. Instead of coming back and calling Willyard to account, Captain Gray led a desperately forlorn hope in Afghanistan and was killed. To make things worse, the wife having been left utterly unprovided for, and basely deserted by Willyard, died in the workhouse.’

‘Is he rich, this Willyard?’

‘Immensely! he has speculated successfully, and landed a very large sum.’

‘I can see that he might endeavour to thwart you in money-matters, but what has that to do with Miss Graham?’

‘He is very intimate with her father; he probably let him share in some good scheme, and has been recently on a visit to Ashton Court.’

‘I begin to see daylight; he may wish to crush you to revenge an insult, and to clear the way for a proposal to Miss Graham.’

‘Probably, but he has not a million to one chance with Ella.’

‘Admitting that, about which you should be the best judge, there is still the awkward question of the bills; if they are not provided for in some way you will, it appears, not only lose the heiress, but have to fly to Boulogne. The moment the bills are protested, every one will be down on you.’

‘In former emergencies you have always given me good advice.’

‘But I am afraid I can’t be of much use to you now. However, you must not despair, we will defer to another day the throwing up of the sponge.’

Allan Ramsay was one of the nicest fellows about town, but he was cursed with an unstable mind. There was one exception, however, to his instability, and that was his determination to get Miss Graham, a beautiful and wealthy young lady, to promise to be his bride. In this he succeeded, after a hard struggle, but it was very much against the wishes of her father that an engagement was permitted. I believe there was a sincere affection between

the young people ; if he lacked firmness, she had plenty of it. Do they not say that like and unlike make good mates ? Her father was a rich commoner, and Allan was the youngest son of a Scotch baronet, who, since the depreciation of land, could scarcely make both ends meet. My friend inherited all his mother's money when she died, but his two years life in London had played havoc with that. His racing speculations were not lucky, and he had lost some large sums at baccarat. There was also a cottage near Regent's Park which cost him a pretty penny, but he immediately put down this extravagance when he became engaged to Miss Graham. Lately he had been leading a very steady life—training, as he called it, for the Benedick Stakes. But he who sows wild oats must expect a day of reaping to come sooner or later, and Allan's day had apparently arrived. But I resolved that such a good fellow should not go to the wall if it could be prevented. The plot to ruin him must, if possible, be defeated. If he could only tide over another six weeks he would be out of all difficulty, as he would then be married. We had been at St. Andrew's together, and he had always looked upon me in the light of an elder brother.

'When are the bills due, and how many are there of them ?' I inquired.

'There are only three, but unluckily they all come due within the next three weeks.'

'That is unfortunate, but leave the matter to me for the present, and come here to-morrow about this time. You know that if I had the money you would have it at once.'

When Allan, looking a little brighter, had left, I went to interview Isaac, the Jew, at his place of business in Waterloo Place. I knew the man, as I had been once or twice to see him on Allan's behalf. He was reported to be able to write a cheque for a big amount, but neither the threadbare suit of black he wore or his surroundings showed any signs of wealth. He may have been only the jackal for —— of Jermyn Street. He received me in his most gracious manner, and politely asked my business.

'You discounted some bills for my friend, Mr. Ramsay. I come from him.'

'Oh, yes,' he said, turning over the pages of a ledger ; 'let me see, I find that there are three of them amounting to 3150*l.*, and they are all due within the next three weeks.'

'So I understand. I suppose there will be no difficulty about renewals ?'

'Money, my dear sir, is very scarce, extremely scarce at present, and I am so sorry I cannot oblige Mr. Ramsay, who is a very nice gentleman.'

'You could get some of your friends to do the business?'

'I am going to tell you a little secret. Being short of money myself, I had to part with these bills.'

'That is a pity, as you know my friend is going to marry a rich young lady in a few weeks when he will be in a position to take them up the next time they become due.'

'Are you quite sure of that?'

'Well, the marriage day is fixed.'

'But you know the old proverb about the "slip between the cup and the lip,"' the Jew said in a sneering tone.

'I don't believe about slips in this case. As we cannot do business, I presume you will not object to give me the name of the present holder of these bills?'

'Certainly not, my dear sir,' and he wrote on a slip of paper the name of a firm in Sackville Street.

They had, so they said, also parted with the bills to a man in Lombard Street.

This man in the city did not deny holding the bills, but he flatly refused to renew one or other of them.

'Why?' I asked; 'the drawer is about to make a splendid marriage.'

'Other people don't think so,' he answered. 'Have you seen the last number of *Society Gossip*?' and he handed me that most untruthful of journals.

A line had been drawn round a certain paragraph, which read:—

'We hear that the marriage between Mr. Allan Ramsay and Miss Graham of Ashton Court will not take place on the day appointed, and that the engagement is not unlikely to be broken off.'

Some enemy had evidently been at work here, and it was quite on the cards that the man who wrote the lying paragraph had also indemnified the Jews against loss. I saw the editor of *Society Gossip*, and asked him from whom he obtained his erroneous information, and he assured me that he had received it from a most reliable source. Although I stated that I represented Mr. Ramsay, he positively declined to insert a contradiction.

From their commencement these specimens of modern journalism have been a pest to the community. They live on scandal. Nothing is sacred to them. They even dog your foot-

steps to your home. The club smoking-room has long been their favourite hunting-ground. How many innocent reputations have they blasted? How often have they destroyed the peace of happy households? A prosecution to them only means a good advertisement, and of what worth are their apologies. It is true the editors are occasionally sent to prison, but by the aid of money they generally manage to get liberated before the expiration of their time. I think Allan was perfectly justified in the forcible language he hurled at them when I showed him the paragraph and told him the result of my visits.

'Well, what is to be done now?' he asked.

'You hear, I suppose, from Miss Graham regularly?'

'I had a letter this morning.'

'No coolness on her part?'

'Just the contrary; I wish I was at liberty to show you her letter.'

'That is out of the question; we must do something, and at once. How much money can you muster?'

'I can find three hundred.'

'With my two that will make five hundred. Not so bad!'

'We must gamble, of course,' he suggested. 'Baccarat?'

'No; a level money chance is of no use to us, and we have not enough funds to take the bank.'

'Monte Carlo?'

'It would have done capitally, but there is not sufficient time. You have driven it so close.'

'I could not foresee the deadlock. Hitherto there has not been the slightest trouble about renewals. I thought you had some plan of backing horses which yielded excellent results?'

'So I have, but it is no certainty.'

'Let us try it at all events; I cannot be in a worse position.'

'It is risky—extra hazardous—for we might just go to a meeting which is antagonistic to the plan. You know that one week is no test of any mode of speculation, and I have never claimed infallibility for mine.'

'What is the scheme? you once tried to explain it to me, but I could not make heads or tails of it.'

'You will have to understand it now,' I answered; 'your whole future may be dependent on the success or failure of it. I will make the investments and you must do the writing.'

I then fully explained the *modus operandi* to him, and as he was all attention this time, he soon saw through its simplicity. The following week was Ascot (1890), and we hired a little cottage

not far from the course. As Miss Graham was abroad, there was no excuse for inattention to business on my friend's part. The plan we adopted was as follows :—

In a note-book Allan wrote down the figures 10, 20, 30, and when we got into the ring, I was to invest 40*l.* on the first favourite. If it won, the two end figures 10 and 30 were struck out, and the next investment would be 20*l.* If that also came off, the 20 would be struck out and the first series completed. Should, however, our first investment have gone to the book-maker, 40 would have been added to the original 10, 20, 30 and the second stake would amount to 50*l.* When one wins, the two figures at each end not already obliterated are struck out, and are of no more use to the series ; when one loses, the exact amount is set down at the right of the line and that sum with the numbers at the left hand not deleted are added together to form the next stake. We decided not to lay more than 2 to 1 on anything. The history of our campaign—of immense importance to one of us—may not be uninteresting to the reader, and I shall copy the results from my friend's betting-book.

The investments were confined to the first favourites.

ASCOT, TUESDAY, June 17th.

FIRST SERIES.

Stake.	Odds.	Horse.	Won.	Lost.
40 <i>l.</i> ...	7 to 4 ...	True Blue	70 <i>l.</i>	—

We were fortunate enough to win 70*l.* over the first race and we now had 20*l.* to invest.

20 <i>l.</i> ...	4 to 6 ...	Simonian	13 <i>l.</i> 6 <i>s.</i>	—
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The second investment being also in our favour we begin a new series.

SECOND SERIES.

TUESDAY *continued.*

Stake.	Odds.	Horse.	Won.	Lost.
40 <i>l.</i> ...	5 to 4 ...	Surefoot	—	40 <i>l.</i>
50 <i>l.</i> ...	5 to 2 ...	Lord Lorne	125 <i>l.</i>	—

The 20 and 30 not struck out are now added together, and form the next stake, viz :—

50 <i>l.</i> ...	9 to 4 ...	Deemster	112 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i>	—
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The second series being now finished we commence afresh. We were evidently in luck's way, but the champagne Allan proposed I declined with thanks. 'After the racing,' I said to that exuberant youth. I hope the reader is now acquainted with the working of the scheme.

THIRD SERIES.

TUESDAY *continued.*

Stake.	Odds.	Horse.	Won.	Lost.
40 <i>l.</i> ...	9 to 4 ...	Golden Maze	—	40 <i>l.</i>
50 <i>l.</i> ...	5 to 4 ...	Gold	62 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i>	—

We now come to Wednesday, but the series is not finished, and is therefore continued.

50 <i>l.</i> ...	4 to 7 ...	Surefoot	28 <i>l.</i> 11 <i>s.</i>	—
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'Conclusion of third series,' wrote Allan, 'confoundedly thirsty; what is the good of always winning if one can't have a drink? After next race I shall lose old mentor for a minute or two.'

FOURTH SERIES.

WEDNESDAY *continued.*

Stake.	Odds.	Horse.	Won.	Lost.
40 <i>l.</i> ...	11 to 8 ...	Childebert	—	40 <i>l.</i>

'NOTE.—Had a small bottle in double quick time.—A. R.'

50 <i>l.</i> ...	4½ to 1 ...	Morion	225 <i>l.</i>	—
50 <i>l.</i> ...	4 to 7 ...	Bumptious	28 <i>l.</i> 11 <i>s.</i>	—

'End of fourth series. Hurrah! This is a veritable gold mine! Won't I tell Ella all about it.—A. R.'

FIFTH SERIES.

WEDNESDAY *continued.*

Stake.	Odds.	Horse.	Won.	Lost.
40 <i>l.</i> ...	4 to 7 ...	Semolina... ..	—	40 <i>l.</i>
50 <i>l.</i> ...	100 to 30 ...	Robin Hood	—	50 <i>l.</i>

THURSDAY.

60 <i>l.</i> ...	11 to 10 ...	Orwell	—	60 <i>l.</i>
70 <i>l.</i> ...	2 to 1 ...	Rousseau	140 <i>l.</i>	—

'Remark by A. R. About time we had a win.'

70 <i>l.</i> ...	85 to 40 ...	Vasistas	—	70 <i>l.</i>
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'Another wrong 'un. Is the tide turning?—A. R.'

90 <i>l.</i> ...	3 to 1 ...	Sir F. Robert	—	90 <i>l.</i>
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'Confounded; off to have a small bottle; beginning to funk.—A. R.'

110 <i>l.</i> ...	4 to 6 ...	Juggler	—	110 <i>l.</i>
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'Oh!—A. R.'

130 <i>l.</i> ...	7 to 4 ...	Laureate	—	130 <i>l.</i>
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'Brandy this time.—A. R.'

Stake.	Odds.	FRIDAY.	Won.	Lost.
150 <i>l.</i> ...	4 to 1 ...	Guiscard	600 <i>l.</i>	—
'Bravo! things are looking up.—A. R.'				
140 <i>l.</i> ...	5 to 4 ...	Beauharnais	175 <i>l.</i>	—
130 <i>l.</i> ...	7 to 2 ...	Miss Dollar	—	130 <i>l.</i>
170 <i>l.</i> ...	85 to 40 ...	Philomel	—	170 <i>l.</i>
210 <i>l.</i> ...	Even ...	Sainfoin	—	210 <i>l.</i>
250 <i>l.</i> ...	5 to 6 ...	Bumptious	209 <i>l.</i>	—

Blue Green won the next and last race, but we did not touch it as it was 3 to 1 on. It will be seen that the fifth series was not completed when the meeting ended, and it was arranged that we should begin with a new series at Newcastle the following week. I say nothing about the trouble I had with Allan, especially when we were winning. I will now produce the balance-sheet of each series. I may state that it is not at all necessary to begin with such a large stake as 40*l.* The 1, 2, 3 of the system might mean pounds, or even a smaller sum, so long as you begin with four stakes and adhere to the other rules.

ASCOT RESULTS.

	Won.	Lost.
First series	£83 6	—
Second series	197 10	—
Third series	51 1	—
Fourth series	213 11	—
Fifth series	64 0	—
Net gain	£609 8	Nil.

One or two important things cropped up between Ascot on Friday and Newcastle on the following Tuesday. Two letters came to my friend from Ems—one from Miss Graham's father, and the other from the young lady herself. Allan handed me the father's epistle to read. It was anything but courteous.

'SIR—In my daughter's interest I have been making inquiry about you, and I am anything but satisfied with the reports sent me, which I have no doubt are thoroughly reliable. They state that you have fast women under your protection, that you gamble a great deal, and that you are in the hands of Jews. From these accounts I should think you must be on the verge of bankruptcy. Now, Sir, it was never with my wish that my daughter became engaged to you, and if you have any sense of honour left, you will at once resign all pretensions to her hand. Any further letters to Miss Graham will be returned unopened.'

'That is what I call a — letter without a single extenuating word in it. What do you think of it, Jack?'

'You must temporise my boy ; time is every thing to us. Write at once and say you have been grossly calumniated ; that since your engagement to Miss Graham you have been guilty of no impropriety whatever ; that you may, like others, have done foolish things in your salad days, but that you have turned over a new leaf, and that you hope to convince him of the fact on an early opportunity.'

'I will write to-night,' Allan said ; 'let us draft out a letter together.'

'Agreed ; is Miss Graham all right ?'

'True as steel ; she writes that there has been a terrible scene, but the darling says I am not to mind that ; if she cannot be mine she will not marry any one else. She adds, in a post-script, that I will have to find a way to get letters delivered to her as she is forbidden to receive any more, and the servants have been instructed.'

'She is a trump, Allan, and well worth winning. Your marriage with a girl like that ought to make a new man of you. I can guess where your certificate of character came from.'

'So can I, but I will cast up accounts with that villain one of these days. I have, first thing this morning, sent my man to Ems with a letter to Ella.'

'The deuce you have ; I am glad, however, that you have done so, as the poor girl must be suffering terribly. Now let us examine the Ascot account and see how much money we have. Capital, 500*l.* ; won 609*l.* 8*s.* : gross total, 1109*l.* 8*s.* Taking the odd 109*l.* 8*s.* for expenses, this will leave us a net 1000*l.* to start with at Newcastle.'

'Right you are ! I shall never be able to return this kindness Jack, but you know that I am not ungrateful.'

'Dont talk rubbish ; there is no bill to meet till next Friday. Let us go and enjoy ourselves.'

We arrived in Newcastle late on Monday night and took up our quarters at the Station Hotel, and were fresh and eager for the fray the following day. The first series was rather a long one, as the following will show :—

NEWCASTLE, TUESDAY, June 24th.

FIRST SERIES.

Stake.	Odds.	Horse.	Won.	Lost.
40 <i>l.</i>	... 3 to 1	... Faust	—	40 <i>l.</i>
50 <i>l.</i>	... 7 to 4	... Ossidine	—	50 <i>l.</i>

A Risky Remedy.

Stake.	Odds.	Horse.	Won.	Lost.
60 <i>l.</i> ...	{ 3 to 1 each ...	Ponza and Hutton } Conyers } 30 <i>l.</i> on each.	—	60 <i>l.</i>
70 <i>l.</i> ...	—	Double Glo'ster ...	—	70 <i>l.</i>
'This is not Ascot.—A. R.'				
80 <i>l.</i> ...	5 to 4 ...	Proteus	100 <i>l.</i>	—
80 <i>l.</i> ...	2 to 1 ...	Aperse	160 <i>l.</i>	—
'After all, 40 <i>l.</i> to the good.—A. R.'				

WEDNESDAY.

80 <i>l.</i> ...	6 to 4 ...	Stourbay	—	80 <i>l.</i>
110 <i>l.</i> ...	6 to 4 ...	Fenrother	165 <i>l.</i>	—
90 <i>l.</i> ...	3 to 1 ...	Houndsditch	270 <i>l.</i>	—
'Pulled up wonderfully, by Jove.—A. R.'				

SECOND SERIES.

WEDNESDAY *continued.*

40 <i>l.</i> ...	8 to 11 ...	Capua	—	40 <i>l.</i>
50 <i>l.</i> ...	4 to 7 ...	Punster	28 <i>l.</i> 11 <i>s.</i>	—
50 <i>l.</i> ...	6 to 4 ...	{ Irish Girl and Garter Blue } 25 <i>l.</i> on each.	37 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i>	25 <i>l.</i>

THIRD SERIES.

40 <i>l.</i> ...	2 to 1 ...	Pierrepoint	80 <i>l.</i>	—
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THURSDAY.

20 <i>l.</i> ...	11 to 8 ...	Chieftain	—	20 <i>l.</i>
40 <i>l.</i> ...	Even ...	Curfew	40 <i>l.</i>	—

FOURTH SERIES.

40 <i>l.</i> ...	4 to 1 ...	Infula	—	40 <i>l.</i>
50 <i>l.</i> ...	8 to 15 ...	Ashton	27 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i>	—

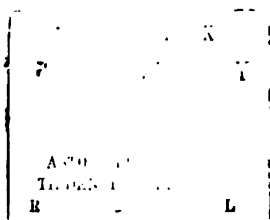
'I like Newcastle better than I did.—A. R.'

We did not touch Fenrother for the last race, as it started at 6 to 1 on.

The following is the result of our speculations :—

NEWCASTLE RESULTS.

	Won.	Lost.
First Series	£395 0	—
Second Series	1 1	—
Third Series	100 0	—
Fourth Series	—	12 10
	£496 1	£12 10
Lost	12 10	
Won	£483 11	



We had now in hand, roughly speaking, 1500*l.*; 700*l.* of which would have to go to meet the first bill, leaving us to fight the bookmakers, 800*l.*; but this third venture—although it would have been fortunate again—was not necessary. When we returned to town on the Thursday evening an alarming telegram was waiting for Allan at his club. It was from Ems, from Mrs. Graham, and read thus :—

‘Terribly distressed. Ella has suddenly disappeared. Telegraph me instantly if you know anything of her. My husband can do nothing, as he has had a fit.’

‘Good God! can she have committed suicide?’ cried Allan in heartrending tones.

‘Not at all likely,’ I said to him; ‘calm yourself, she is too sensible a girl to do anything so ridiculous. Go to your chambers and see if you can learn any trace of her there. I will wait for you at the club. You did not notice that the telegram was dated yesterday.’

‘No I did not; do wait for me, I won’t be many minutes.’

He was soon back again with a note and another telegram in his hand. From his pleased look I saw that he had received no bad news.

The note over which he was so madly enraptured merely said :—

‘Could stand the persecution no longer. Am staying at South Bolton Street. Come.—ELLA.’

‘I told you she was not one of the suicidal sort. What’s in the telegram?’

‘Oh, Jack, I am the happiest man on earth to-night, and do answer it for me, as I must go at once to Ella.’

‘Be off,’ I said; ‘only scapegraces like you get such slices of good luck.’

The telegram was from Mrs. Graham :—

‘Found out that Ella booked to London. For heaven’s sake bring her back to her heartbroken parents. Everything will be arranged to your satisfaction.’

I risked sending this reply in my friend’s name :—

‘Ella quite safe with friends in South Bolton Street. Will return to Ems to-morrow. No occasion for slightest anxiety. I was in the North when your first message arrived.’

Need I say that a marriage took place very soon after this, and that the Jews, on seeing the contradiction of the lying para-

graph in a respectable paper like the *Morning Post*, were only too anxious to do business with my friend, but he had no longer any need of them. Confirmation of Willyard's base conduct in trying to defame my friend's character and ruin him financially were subsequently forthcoming, and the heartless seducer was expelled from clubland.

It is early to prophecy, but I do really think Allan will turn out a model husband.

He owns he has been fortunate, but swears that the system was quite capable of pulling him through all his difficulties, and that a knowledge of it is equal in value to the possession of a gold mine.

THE WHISSENDINE.

By TOM MARKLAND.



HE Whissendine sprang from his couch with glee,
'Oh! I will be king of the streams,' cried he.

The Amazon rolls through his endless groves:
The Po through his marvellous cornfields roves:
The 'Father of Waters,' through changing climes,
Flows far ere he reaches the groves of limes:
The bosom of Thames may upheave with pride
At the treasures untold on his golden tide:
'Tis little I care for their swollen wave,
Their mirrors reflect not the 'scarlet brave.'

Chorus: But the races that range the wide confines of Quorn,
And find music in Belvoir or Cottesmore horn,
Through the ages shall find on the Whissendine's banks,
There'll be picking of places among the first ranks.

I'll hollow the turf, I'll wend where I will,
I'll lurk at the base of each dangerous hill,
For here come St. Hubert's votaries brave
To taste of the Whissendine's tiny wave:
Bold Magyar counts, the barons of Rhine,
In turn come to grief at the Whissendine.
At times a young squire or a yeoman gay
I receive in a friendly sort of way:
I marked one day in my frolicsome flood,
A parson, a count, a prince of the blood.

Chorus: Yea, the races that range the wide confines of Quorn, &c.

Stout Lennox made boast that his well-tried steed
Could land him in safety on Ashwell's mead;

But I was a 'bumper;' I laughed, 'Ho! ho!'
 To see the brave lord and his courser go.
 I'd heard of him bragging, aye, times a score,
 He cared for 'that bullying brook' no more,
 Not he—than he did for the start-up thing
 That owes its beginning to Scalford spring;
 A brook so contemptible scarce it knew
 How duffers to duck on a three-legged screw.

Chorus: Yea, the races that range the wide confines of Quorn, &c.

A century now I have played the game,
 The record each season is still the same:
 There's scarlet well stained in proud Solza's hall,
 And more where the waves of the Hudson fall:
 I count on my record each well-known name
 On the metropolitan roll of fame.
 The 'Annandale boys,' the heavy weight, too,
 Got stopped in the midst of their wild halloo;
 And didn't my banks nigh split with my roar,
 When making acquaintance with old Dick Floar?

Chorus: Yea, the races that range the wide confines of Quorn, &c.

But few have I missed; Floar's namesake, Dick—
 Dick Christian, I mean—could manage to pick
 His point when a couple of fields away,
 And fly beyond reach of the squadron gay.
 Ned Burbridge the graceful my skill defied;
 To groom the stout grey in my brawling tide;
 One other has beat me, I'm bound to say,
 And he's the best man in the shires to-day;
 So grumble I can't at Dame Fortune's frowns,
 But still I'll keep watch for douce Charley Downs.


Chorus: Yea, the races that range the wide confines of Quorn, &c.

Great waters you'll find within far Cathay;
 But many a warrior dwells this day,
 In hail of the Ganges or Punjaub streams,
 Who oft in the gloaming of Cottessmore dreams;
 Whose bungalow oft in the evening rings
 With lays of the home of the 'sport of kings,'
 And many a song will contain a line
 In praise of their foe, the old Whissendine:
 Whenever those boys can their 'leave' obtain,
 You may swear they'll 'have at' that foe again.

Chorus: Yea, the races that range the wide confines of Quorn, &c.

THE COMING YACHTING SEASON.

By 'AN OLD CORINTHIAN.'

OR a full month tar-pots have been boiling on the decks of our English yachts, which have been hibernating on the mud at Southampton or riding at anchor at Gourock Bay on Clyde. Brasses have been burnished, fittings of the upholstery order aired, sails overhauled, and crews have been engaged and measured for their new suits. At every yachting resort the British yachting skipper, in his new coat of blue and his brass buttons, has of late made himself conspicuous; he is always at this season of the year an important British personage—the respected of pier and harbour loungers, and the most beloved of seaside barmaids. In the London yachting clubs, which are mostly situated in Albemarle Street, there has been a good deal of regret expressed over the gloomy outlook for first-class racing. Schooner racing, as we knew it in the days of *Egeria* and *Pantomime*, seems to have gone out, to the disappointment of a great many of those who belong to the old British yachting school. A grand sight indeed it was to see the 'County Down' boat (as the former was called in Belfast Lough, from which she hailed) 'broad reaching' with the latter, in a full breeze of wind across Cowes Bay. Then the fighting in the yawl classes fell off after the hauling down of the flags of *Florinda* and *Latona*, and the first-class cutters held the key of the plate locker with *Vanduara*, *Samæna*, *Iverna*, *Thistle*, *Marjorie*, *Valkyrie*, &c.

Up Albemarle way there has been a lot of gossip over *Valkyrie*, which, it would now seem settled, has been sold to the Archduke Stephen of Austria for 6000*l*. She will not be raced in British waters, and so *Iverna* will (unless *Meteor* does come out) have first-class cutter racing all to herself, a state of matters which will not suit Skipper Billy O'Neil, who will feel lonely without somebody to air the Dublin brogue upon in his own characteristic fashion. As usual, there has been a lot of chatter going on about the *Thistle*, now *Meteor*, and it was said that the Emperor of Germany had set his heart upon winning the Queen's Cup at Cowes with her. This would be a very barren honour so far as yacht racing is concerned, as competition is confined to that most august body, the Royal Yacht Squadron,

and it is notorious that the Cup has been invariably secured by the long outclassed vessels of the British yacht racing fleet. Said a 'Royal London' man the other night, alluding to the report that the Emperor would steer her, 'If he does want to win he'll better stay ashore, for it's no use trying to sail a racing yacht with two Emperors on board.' This, to British yachtsmen, carries its own meaning, for Gomes, who has been engaged to sail her, is, like most racing skippers, aristocratic; and when he is interfered with he is inclined to resent the liberty in language that is not broken German.

Emperor No. 2 is a Southsea man, quite uneducated, but nurtured to sea life from the days of his cradlehood, and there is no doubt a splendid hand in a racing boat. What Emperor No. 2 will say to No. 1 if the latter will not put his head up beneath the weather rail in a close squeeze to windward, or gets in the way of the backstay-preventer man at a heavy gybe round a lee mark we will not conjecture. In the *Formosa*, Dick Diaper, who had also a vocabulary when he sailed that cutter for the Prince of Wales, was having a bit of explanation made to him by Prince George, fresh off the *Bacchante* from his round the world voyage with the late Duke of Clarence.

'You teach your grandmother to suck eggs,' and he blurted out as an apology that he 'meant no particular grandmother.'

Gomes might not get off so easily if he said this to a Queen's grandson.

In the meantime he has brought her across from Kiel, and she is being got ready for the racing season, which opens on the Thames the 23rd May next. As *Meteor* she may not do so well as, when *Thistle*, in this match she secured her maiden victory. Mr. Watson has re-altered her sail plan, the new spars are ready, and Laphorne & Ratsey, of Cowes, have got the new canvas suit waiting to bend on. The other alterations are all of a minor character. Apart from any little chaff, Gomes was in *Petronella*, and sailed that boat hard when he had a row. He then went over to Mr. Hodgers and sailed the *Vreda*, quite to the satisfaction of her owner, and the admiration of good judges of yachtsmanship. He next had in hand the *Vandura*, the famous steel cutter which was the sensation boat of 1880, with which he beat the great 1880 rival, *Samana*, in the cruising class, topping the latter as regards winning flags every time. The *Blue Rock* was next under his pilotage, and he got her off as quickly as any blue rock from the traps of Hurlingham or

Monte Carlo. He won a lot of prizes with her, though not allowed to race against the home boats. A hard-working, perfectly steady man, he will take all out of *Meteor* if she is allowed to be raced, but if interfered with, as suggested, he will throw his charge up, and small blame to him, as no one can afford to give a half-second away to O'Neil in *Iverna*. The latter is now being fitted out, and will also have a new suit of canvas. The disappointment will be the absence of *Valkyrie* if *Meteor* really comes out, which, as has been said, is at present problematical.

No one ever hears the American Cup now talked about, though there was much genuine regret expressed over the loss of poor Burgess, who had so steadily and strongly defended it. If, as has been said, he borrowed a good many ideas from the British, as will be noticed further down, the British have not been slow to take a few notions from him. Who is to be his successor as a designer on the American side when the Cup comes to be defended again can of course be but a matter of conjecture? Mr. Carey Smith has a very good eye for a boat, and is not ever likely to turn out anything so ugly as *Gloriana*. Herexhoff's ideas have nothing new about them, but he is scientific, and an engineer, and this must go a long way. Moreover, on the other side they are very skilled mechanics, admittedly so by the yacht-builders on this side, and a wonderfully light hull well put together means half the battle.

In the meantime we must have a glance round the yards and see what is doing in the way of new boats. So far as we can observe there are absolutely no new first-class boats building, a fact somewhat strange, as we always have had one big new one during the past twelve years. Since small-boat racing is however fashionable and exciting, a cruiser, comfortable and dry, and a 2½ ton rater is the order of the day. Watson has built a 40 tonner, 59 feet, for Captain Towers-Clark, which will be well sailed by Gold, who was skipper of the *Velziel*. Close at hand in the same yard, where was built *Vanduarda*, *Thistle* (*Meteor*), and many others, is a companion 40 tonner, 59 feet 5½ inches in length, for Mr. T. B. C. West, a well-known southern yachtsman, and most enthusiastic sailor. This is the *Queen Mab*, a vessel of the type of the well-known *Dora*. She has a centre-board, and this makes me reflect on the changes of opinion which have taken place here since Burgess visited the famous 'Anchor

Line yard,' where the classic River Kelvin joins the Clyde, to gather a few British ideas about English cutters. Ben Parker, of the well-known Itchen Ferry family of skippers, who have sailed yachts since George the Third was king, and who was in *The Dragon*, will have charge. Both boats are of composite construction. They will make their début on the opening Thames Match, from Gravesend, on 23rd May, round the Mouse Light and back. They are Watsonian in everything, having nice easy lines, and as a rule will go well to windward. Whether *Varuna* will beat *Queen Mab*, or *The Queen* beat *Varuna*, must be even in the builder's mind a matter of conjecture, but should the centre-board win, America will be able to claim in home waters a victory somewhat akin to what they did when the early copies of the *America* cutter came to the front 30 years ago. A screw schooner of 132 tons, Thames measurement, length 102 feet, for Mr. Albert Goderham, of Canada, is building in Canada. Watson has no tens building this year, but down at Scott & Co.'s yard in Greenock he has well forward a 32 feet long, 5 ton rater, for Mr. Trevor Henderson, of which much is expected. The five ton class, once so strong on Clyde and Solent, has been completely shoved out by the 2½ tonners. A 3 tonner has been designed by Watson for Prince Osman Pasha, Egypt, which is building somewhere on the Nile. The 2½ tonners number seven in all. No. 1 is for Samuel Henden, Australia, 25 feet 6 inches in length, building at Greenock; No. 2, *Verve*, length 23 feet, for Mr. Robert Wyllie, who has had a lot of '*Verves*,' 10 tonners, and who is a champion of the centre-board; No. 3, *Lily*, 23 feet 5 inches, is for Mr. Ure; No. 4, is 26 feet, and is for Mr. F. J. Walsh; No. 5, 26 feet, is being built at Shanghai, for Mr. Duncan Gless; No. 6, 23 feet, is for Mr. Tullis, Royal Clyde Yacht Club; and No. 7, *Fan Tan*, 23 feet, is for Mr. C. Henderson.

The curious feature about all these boats is that they are lug rigged, after the style of the East of Scotland fishing boats. The lug, though troublesome when 'dipping' in a stiff breeze and sea, is in other respects handy, and when well set the sail allows of the laying of a very high wind. In the East of Scotland the boats are built very broad, after the American style, and the temptation being to have too high a hoist in the sail.

A curious feature of Clyde yacht-building this year is the complete 'Americanizing' of the Fairlie yard of Messrs. Fife

& Son. This is the oldest, and perhaps the most select yacht-building yard in Great Britain, we ought to say the world, and has always been the most Conservative as regards type of vessel, the Fifes for three generations sticking to round-bodied boats, and refusing, even when hard pressed, to go in for the 'plank on edge' business.

Their triumphs with *Fiona*, *Cytheria*, *Neva*, *Cuckoo*, *Annasonna*, *Neptune*, and *Clara*, are well known. This year they are only building one single fixed keel boat, a 10 tonner. Another 10 tonner is an out-and-out centre-board, having great beam and great length in the water-line fore and aft. Another of similar length and beam has the centre-board dividing the keel only. The two 5 ton raters and two 2½ ton raters are all of a similar type. Indeed young Fife's ideas, gathered in America, seems to have caused a complete revolution in the famous yachting capital of Largs, where even fifteen years ago a man who had promulgated the idea of a divided keel would have been, in old man-of-war fashion, used as a keel scraper.

A BOAR-HUNT IN FRANCE.

By X.

'Fill the goblet to the brim,
Fill with me, and drink to him
Who the mountain sport pursues,
Speed the boar where'er he choose;
Hurrah! hurrah! one bumper more,
A bumper to the grim grey boar.'

IT was about the middle of April, but instead of soft breezes and spring showers, the weathercock never wavered from its direct allegiance to the N.E., and the ground was hard and dusty. Fox-hunting was well-nigh over, and, weary of watching the longest and wretchedest of winters changing into a tardy spring, we resolved on a jaunt across the Channel.

No sooner said than done! Accordingly Gaze's tickets and a 'Bædeker' were promptly purchased in a truly tourist-like fashion; but 'sightseeing' rather went back in the betting after a hurried interview with a 'travelled' friend, a genuine vagrant, and wanderer upon the face of the earth. 'Go on to F—

from Paris, and have a boar-hunt; capital sport. I was there last year,' he said, jumping into a hansom in a prodigious hurry to catch a train *en route* for the North Pole, or some hitherto unvisited spot.

We began to clamour for particulars, but there was an impetuous broken-down 'plater' between the shafts of his cab, with only one side to its mouth and a vile temper, and this combination carried him rapidly round the next corner ere we could ask a single question. So we placed our trust in him, and, taking a good deal for granted, resolved to try this new departure in the hunting line. Accordingly, the next evening, after a long and weary journey, found us at the excellent Hotel de France at F——, whilst, between mouthfuls of omelette and hot coffee, we plied the *garçon* with questions, the sporting turn of which rather bamboozled him. However, we acquired the welcome information that M. le Duc's boarhounds met within reach on the next day but one, and that since the snow had gone they had been having *des chasses magnifiques*.

We slept soundly on that good news, and next morning went off in quest of hirelings, and secured two aged ex-troopers from a very civil and sporting individual who took the most optimistic views on every subject. He assured us that his horses were better than they looked, and vowed by the ashes of his remotest ancestors that no day could be too long for them, and right good beasts they turned out, despite appearances, so the ancestral ashes remained undisturbed.

The following morning dawned wet and cold, but brightened later on, the ground soaking, and a keen air; it felt all over like a good hunting day, and surely there would be a scent. The rendezvous was at twelve o'clock, and only a few miles from F——, so we ate a leisurely, though, in the opinion of the fussy, friendly little waiter, an insufficient breakfast, mounted our horses, and hacked quietly on, through long-stretching alleys and broad, sandy paths, till we got to the four cross-roads where hounds met. Such roads, too; so flat, wide, and straight, diverging in endless vistas through the forest. The trees were only just tipped with green as yet, the silver-stemmed birch-tree, lady of the woods, being far ahead of the rest. At the meet some thirty couple of hounds were held in leash by red-coated *piqueurs* on foot. They were chiefly draft foxhounds from England, with some French hounds of the same stamp. All bore the initial of their owner clipped in the hair upon their sides.

The *grand piqueur*, or huntsman, and his two whippers-in were mounted on workmanlike horses, all wearing picketing reins, which proved useful ere the day was out. The saddle of the first-mentioned carried a small gun, used on occasion to shoot the boar when at bay, should he be too fierce to tackle with a knife. The Master was on foot, amongst his hounds, receiving, in turn, the communications of the several men who stood bareheaded before him to report the results of their 'harbouring' during the previous night and early morning.

The wild boar is always a very uncertain find; herds of them wander through the great forests of France, haunting those parts where acorns and beechmast are in greatest abundance. They are 'here to-day and gone to-morrow,' so the task of harbouring is no light one.

Woodcraft and 'slotting' seemed to be thoroughly understood by these men, who had been at work on their different beats in the forest through long hours of darkness, and chill, grey dawn; and, aided by a good-nosed but mute hound held in leash, they generally succeed in tracking the boar, and harbouring him very closely. This day, news was brought of two huntable animals being within measurable distance of our hopes, so orders were given, and hounds were led off. The 'field' consisted of the Master, on a well-bred hunter; several well-mounted men who might have come from an English covert-side; one lady, riding a grey horse of high class; and an elderly sportsman on a nice, compact animal, who, with his second horseman in close attendance, saw as much of the run as most people, having a rare eye for hounds.

But, with these, and a few other exceptions, the majority of the 'field' were cavalry and artillery officers in their picturesque uniforms. (What would not English officers do rather than hunt in their tight, heavy, and costly uniforms?) These sportsmen were mostly mounted on well-bred galloping-looking horses, and looked thorough horsemen, with good hands, and made their horses bend and go in good form. Several of them we were told were very successful between the flags; one, in particular, on a brown thorough-bred horse, being a well-known 'gentleman jock.' A large number of carriages were at the meet, and pursued the chase afterwards, getting sadly in the way till at last checked off by the pace. The ladies, notwithstanding their smart apparel, showed great keenness, urging on their *cochers* to yet greater speed; these Jehus were already sufficiently

jealous of each other, which occasionally resulted in trouble at the corners.

Hunting seemed altogether popular, for the foot-people were keen as mustard, and eager to see the sport as even a good old English labourer, who, though he occasionally heads a fox, is at heart the best sportsman in the world.

Away we went gaily, jogging along the forest rides till we came to some very broken, rocky ground, and thick undergrowth, rare 'lying' for any wild animal. One hound, which an Exmoor man would describe as a 'tufter,' was thrown into covert, a staunch old stager with a voice like a bell. The *piqueurs* cheered him with voice and horn; wild uncanny-sounding cries to our ears, though, now and then, something very like an English cheer rang out.

The whole scene was like a glance back into mediæval times, and reminded us of a hunting picture of Louis XIV.'s day. The long red hunting coats, gold-edged caps, collars, cuffs, and great flap pockets, belts, and *couteaux de chasse*, white leathers, and high black boots, and last but by no means least, the great brass horns worn round the shoulders, and twitched off with extraordinary dexterity when a blast was to be blown.

Presently a hound spoke, old 'Piquefort,' then more were unleashed; and ere very long the boar was fairly afoot, and the first move in the game duly played. Wild halloas announced the view, and with 'tantaras' from the different horns, added to the crash of hounds just unleashed and scoring to cry, the chase began in a perfect riot of sound.

'No fear of losing them in these woods after all,' we said to each other, not knowing that the scent left by a big boar is very strong, and, therefore, hounds would be likely to run fast, giving 'only the notes of a modified chorus' to guide us as to their whereabouts. Up a long ride we galloped in great, though suppressed excitement; the pack on our right, in covert, running hard.

Turned!—all the way back again! A check!—ah! the fun was just going to begin then. 'The grim grey boar' had made his point at last, and the chime of hounds' voices rang out, staunch and true on his line, undistracted by the red hinds and lordly stag that crossed the ride an instant before them.

Away swept the flying chase, down green alleys fringed with silvery birches, and amongst the great, bare forest trees, while the cuckoo, nothing daunted, singing ever her song of summer, flitted softly through the vistas overhead.

On we galloped in the pine-woods, reeking with their own pungent sweetness, under a cloudless blue sky, and a hot sun which shimmered and flickered between the branches, falling in a thousand golden chequers on our path. In such weather the clear, marshy pools above the crags of F—— were welcome both to boar and hounds, and the hunted animal splashed through the cool, amber water ere he descended, to try and find refuge in his strongholds amongst the rocks. Yet, though hounds necessarily ran much slower 'midst the huge, tumbled masses of grey stone, with their many clefts and chasms, still these

'Ruthless pursuers were raging behind,
And the yell of their war-cry was borne on the wind;
He must scour his dominions a refuge to find,
Nor fail in the test.'

And so the boar sped on. He must have been startled, too, as he skirted a mounted vedette, standing a picturesque and motionless figure at the end of a long, green ride, forbidding any to pass lest they should come within the range of the artillery practice.

We could hear the great guns at their work miles away, and the after-explosion as the shells burst in the sandbanks not far below the outpost. For a moment one could not help thinking of war, and transforming the now scattered 'field' into skirmishers; but the sight of hounds soon banished the dream. Two relays had been posted in different parts of the forest, and had been slipped, one very successfully, close up to the boar, the other too far in the rear. Still, on they came, doggedly sticking to the line, and were of great use to thrown out and defeated sportsmen.

The French hounds have extraordinary nose, and are therefore invaluable for woodland hunting; but, at the finish, the English foxhounds alone have the mettle to go in at the boar, showing the dash and courage so characteristic of a high-bred animal.

There was little turning or twisting now, on and on we galloped through the woodland rides; now amongst great Scotch firs, the slanting rays of the afternoon sun gleaming ruddy on their trunks; then scrambling up and down stony paths, through narrow defiles and sandy trackways, which led us in and out between the huge grey moss-grown rocks of M——. One could not dream a fairer picture; could we stop to drink

in its beauty? No, indeed; the savage instinct is stronger than any other when hounds are running. *Ralli la haut! Ralli la haut! Ecoute! écoute! écoute!*

‘Hark forrard, forrard, forrard, away!’

Go, hark to him, hark!’

And holding our horses together, and making the most of them—for who could tell how long this might last?—we still kept on our way.

‘Still, still more select was our company proving,’ as the Master, riding with his eye forward, cheered on his hounds in thorough enjoyment of the chase, which now lay over a rough, up-and-down country towards the verge of the forest. A little band of officers, still holding their pride of place, and going quite at their ease on the ‘quality’ horses afore-mentioned, with one or two other sportsmen and our lucky selves, made up the field.

Another mile or two, and the hounds suddenly turned up to the right for a craggy stronghold of overhanging rock which frowned above us. In a moment there broke on our ears that roar so unmistakable to all who have ever heard it, whether among the purple ‘combes’ of Exmoor, or in distant hunting grounds—the deep baying—the baying of hounds in grim earnest, right up to their quarry at last. Yet a note of fear was mingling with their wrath and defiance as one after another of the hounds went in at the boar, only to come back gashed and seamed by those wicked tusks, as the long, cruel head and gleaming eyes turned quickly from side to side.

The Master crashed in through the bushes, hastily picketed his horse, and, with the true sportsman’s instinct, scrambled up to try and help his hounds. But ere he could reach them the great, gaunt beast ‘broke from his bay,’ and, with every bristle erect along his back, charged down amongst the brushwood that covered the rocky hillside. His strength failing him, the boar backed for his first stronghold; but hounds were all round him, and the Master, running in at no small risk to himself, gave the *coup de grace* with his long hunting-knife.

It was a twelve-mile point; and, as hounds ran it considerably further, one could hardly believe that a boar, however gaunt and leggy, could stand up before foxhounds for so long. They travel through woods and undergrowth at great speed, which of course gives them a pull. There we stood, a

little group amongst the bushes, around the fallen boar, already stiff as steel, showing how thoroughly 'run up' he was when killed. The panting, eager hounds, keen to 'tear him and eat him' then and there; our blown and lathered horses glad enough to stand still and recover their wind, whilst their owners tried not to look *too* triumphant at being among the lucky few.

What a curious fact it is that 'everybody's' run, no matter how good or over what country it may be, does not yield that intense, though suppressed, satisfaction to any one as that which is felt by the lucky half-dozen who have, as they gleefully describe it, 'slipped the field, and had twenty minutes up wind, to ground, a stiff line, but all grass, and not a soul ever saw the way we went.'

But 'to return to our muttons,' as Mr. Jorrocks hath it.

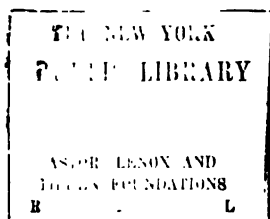
The Master blew several shrill blasts on his horn, which eventually brought up the *piqueurs* and divers others of the field who had been thrown out. Then the wild 'fanfares' from the horns began, the three officials each placing a foot upon the boar's carcase, whilst the mocking, fantastic notes of triumph rose and fell, and came echoing back from the rugged rocks above a hundredfold.

A strange scene truly. Many a weary mile intervened between us and the courtyard where the *curée*, the real conclusion of the day's sport, was to take place; so, when the boar's entrails had been given to the hounds, a general move was made for home; we riding slowly for the sake of our tired horses, yet in a most contented frame of mind. The far-stretching forest and vistas looked dim and mysterious in the silent twilight, and still more eerie and lonesome in the rays of a lovely moon which shone down on us ere we reached the town and its many glimmering lights.

By-and-by, in the quaint courtyard of the inn, torches were lit and a crowd assembled. The boar's carcase, too heavy for the *piqueur's* tired horse to carry, had been brought back in a cart, and was laid at one end of the yard, whilst the eager, famished hounds were held back at the other. Then the *grand piqueur* and his two assistants advanced, and, with one foot each on their fallen foe, struck up their wild, barbaric-sounding music—each tune having some meaning of its own. The torches flared and smoked, casting fierce lights and deep shadows, and all the while the fantastic sounds floated gaily out into the still night air and the clear darkness of the sky.

"Coup de grace"





The boar's 'slots' were presented to the lucky ones. *Les honneurs du pied ont été fait*, and at last hounds were set free, and, with one yell and with one rush, they threw themselves on the carcase, and in an instant nothing could be seen but a wrestling, growling mass. Red torches were then lit, which cast a lurid glow over the scene of carnage, and many were the fights over specially tough or choice morsels ; both whiplash and rate being needed before peace could be restored.

The oleanders in their big tubs rocked to their fall, and a rash *garçon*, who, with a male housemaid in a green-baize apron, and armed only with a feather brush, evinced too close and keen an interest in the proceedings, nearly got eaten by mistake, and retired to their own sphere of activity sadder and wiser men.

The last fragment of the boar was finally dispatched, once and again the horns rang out, and weary hounds and men got back to the kennels, luckily not far distant, at last.

It is a wild, genuine sport, this boar-hunting, and right good sportsmen are its supporters, and kind, courteous, and hospitable to strangers, as we had the good fortune to experience.

Politicians say there will be another Franco-Prussian war. We trust not ; but if there should be, we shall think of our day's sport over in sunny France—

'And were this our last bumper to swallow,
We'll drink them good luck in the glass.'

THE HEAD OF THE RIVER.

By 'CINQFOIL.'



HE boat-race fever is at its height. The long, weary days of training, of enforced walks, rigorous dieting and no tobacco, are drawing to a close, and the 'Varsity generally is preparing in right joyous fashion to celebrate the May week. But for the racing crews the time is one of trouble and anxiety ; the one absorbing topic which has grown in interest day by day has seized upon their minds, to the exclusion of all else, and the dread of coming exams. is as nothing compared with the respective merits of the ships turned out by Winter or Logan, or the Tyne-built importations from Swaddle and Winship.

Day by day keen and critical eyes have watched the com-

petitors as they have come slashing up the Long Reach in practice, and the enthusiasts are familiar not only with the capabilities of the various crews, but also with the faults and failings of the individual oars in the most fancied boats.

This year the excitement is keener than usual, as several colleges, formerly low down on the river, have been improving for some time, and have now turned out crews which, for style and pace, are far superior to any of their predecessors; while some of the former occupants of high places have not satisfied expectations, and the popular verdict is that they must go down.

Clare has been for several years at the head of the river, but has failed to keep up its supply of good men, and is lamentably wanting in power in the middle of the boat, and the wearers of the black and amber are quite prepared to succumb to Emmanuel, who are next behind them. The latter college has put on a very good boat, which rows together like clockwork, and can keep going at a great rate, though they are somewhat light in the bows. Their stroke is an old Blue, who has rowed twice in the 'Varsity, and they are quite confident of securing the honoured post of Head of the River, as they are justified in thinking that they stand in no danger from the Trinity boat, next below them.

Caius occupies the fourth place, and has a good working crew, which it is believed will hold its own. Pembroke has a strong, hard crew, which has developed wonderfully during the training, having had the constant advice of an old Blue, named Donaldson, who came up on purpose to see to their preparation, having heard great things of the raw material on which he would have to work. The result is manifest in the increased pace of the boat, and now that they have been for a week in their new Clasper-built ship, they feel certain that the last night will see them advanced some steps towards the coveted post of honour.

Corpus, standing eighth on the list, has a clinking good boat, which has shown such rare speed, that the connoisseurs affirm that Clare and Emmanuel are lucky in having so many boats between them, or else the 'Varsity might be startled by the sight of the cherry and white blazers leading the procession of boats in King's Meadow.

Donaldson, as he watched the Pembroke men assembled for breakfast in his rooms, disposing of their regulated quantities of beefsteak, toast and watercress, felt that never before had he had

under him so promising a crew or one so thoroughly fit to race. Meyrick, an eleven stone ten man at the after thwart, has been setting a long, clean, lively stroke, and has been well backed up by those behind him, in spite of the fact that Landor, his seven, is making his first appearance on slides; but he is a strong, painstaking oar, with plenty of swing, and staying power enough to go for a week.

'If we can only manage to keep away the first night, we may get a shot at Clare after all,' exclaims cox., as he fills up the second cups of tea—for it is the coxswain's duty to preside at the teapot.

'So we will, and I'm certain those chaps can't catch us,' replies bow energetically. 'But I am not anyway sure that Trinity are as slow as they are said to be; they were clearing a lot of water yesterday.'

'Yes; but can they race?'

'Three and four are feathering under water, and bow screws right out of the boat.'

And so they rattle on, getting no nearer to a settlement of the vexed question, which the race alone can decide.

'Now, my lads, we'll have a jog over to Landbeach and back after chapel, and then you can have a holiday for the rest of the day. Cox., you little beggar, don't forget your greatcoat. I must have 3 lbs. more off before Wednesday, mind,' are the trainer's injunctions, as the men disperse after breakfast.

Monday and Tuesday are spent in practising starts and spurts, a most necessary part of the preparation which is to be put to the test on Wednesday and the succeeding five nights. Six nights' successive racing is a terrible strain on the stamina of the men, and many a crew which has gone in splendid style on the Wednesday, gets worn out before the concluding night, and fails to sustain its reputation.

The result of the first night's racing showed how well the critics had gauged the merits of the respective crews. Clare went down just upon reaching the railway bridge before the victorious Emmanuel, and the rejoicings in that college were enough to have made the old Puritan founder turn in his grave. Trinity rowed over, as the Caius crew were easily caught by Pembroke at Ditton; while Corpus disposed of Queens' with ridiculous ease in the Plough Reach.

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday saw Pembroke and Corpus still what the Yankees would call, 'On the up-grade,' the former

having disposed of Trinity on Thursday and Clare on Saturday, while Corpus had gone up every night. Sunday was an anxious day for all concerned; the festivities were at their height, but were not for such as they. The town was filled with visitors, amongst whom the usual swarm of sisters and cousins were conspicuous.

To Tom Landor the Sunday 'grind' was a veritable penance, for he knew well that the Mellors, with whom he had spent part of Christmas vacation, had arrived the night before, and he was longing once more to meet Kitty Mellor, the youngest girl, whose bright, laughing face had haunted him perpetually since he had last seen her, as she waved a cheery good-bye after driving her brother and himself to the station.

Tom failed to find the Mellors at home when he called, so he went off, as he would have expressed it, to 'draw King's,' where he soon spotted them amongst the crowd in the ante-chapel, but was disgusted to find that they were accompanied by a man named Robson, whom he had cordially detested from the first, recognising him instinctively as a devoted admirer of the fair Kitty, with the advantage, moreover, of possessing a far larger portion of this world's goods than was ever likely to fall to his own share. His presence seemed to fall like a cloud over Landor as he stood there, hardly listening even to the sounds of probably the most exquisitely toned organ in England; but his spirits rose as they came out of the chapel at the very cordial greeting he received from his friends. During the remainder of this Sunday and on the following Monday, Landor was much troubled by the evidently intimate terms on which Robson stood with all the family, and it was with a heavy heart that he went down to the boats prepared to do his best; but on this night fortune did not favour the Pembroke colours, and though they rowed a splendid race with Emmanuel, could never get within a length of them. Meanwhile Corpus caught the unfortunate Clare boat, thus making their fifth bump, and reaching the third place on the river.

The last night of the races arrives at last. Tom Landor and Meyrick walk quietly down together to the railway bridge, in plenty of time before the races, and get themselves put over in a punt to the meadow above the Willows, where the knowing ones are placing themselves, well knowing that, bar accidents, the pinch of the coming race will be high up in the Long Reach, and leaving the orchard at Ditton for the crowd. The Mellors have a carriage here, and Miss Kitty, with Robson in attendance, is perched on

the box-seat. Tom is in a dismal frame of mind, dissatisfied with the boat and its performances, and hurt by the apparent satisfaction with which Robson's attentions are received. He would have stayed on the towpath side, and not gone near the Mellors' carriage, had not he felt that it might look like temper on his part.

'Well! are you chaps going to do the trick to-night?' asked Dick Mellor, as they stood chatting.

'I don't know; probably not. We shall have all we can do to keep away from Corpus, I expect,' replies Meyrick.

As Tom turns to go, after taking off his straw to Mrs. Mellor, he glances upward to the box, and sees Kitty's face looking down at him with some concern.

'I'm *sure* you'll win,' she says, as she holds out her hand, which Tom grasps with an energy which makes the small fingers ache for an hour afterwards; but it was with a lighter heart that he jumped into the punt after his friend, and rejoined the eager throng on the towpath.

The boats put off one after the other and paddle sharply down the Long Reach, easying off Ditton, and gliding smoothly past the crowd, as each man doffs his 'straw' to the ladies, before paddling on once more to the start. Corpus, on their way down, receiving a tremendous ovation, which their continued successes have well deserved.

How few people ever go down to see the start for the May Races, and yet it is as well worth seeing as the middle, and far better than the end in most instances.

Post Reach is full of boats swinging round, and then becomes clear, as each boat moors up at its appointed station, while the crews get out and stand about on the towpath, surrounded by an excited crowd of partisans. The starters for each boat go to where old Harvey, the 'Varsity waterman, stands beside the cannon, and get the exact time from his watch; the captains give final instructions; the nervous take a suck at a flask of cold tea and lemon juice, or some such vile mixture, as they stroll to and fro.

Suddenly the gun goes, and the crowd, which has been spread all up and down the reach, sorts itself into many coloured groups as they collect round the several starting posts.

After a moment or two, the crews can be seen stripping off their blazers, and preparing to step in. The babel of tongues is simply terrific, but it is suddenly hushed as the second gun goes.

The coxswain holds on to his chain while the ship is pushed steadily out into the stream, and held there by a boat-hook.

'Touch her, bow!' cries the coxswain, nervously. 'That'll do. Touch her, two!' he adds anxiously, as her head swings out too far. 'Bow and two.'

'Fifteen seconds left,' cries the Captain.

'Touch her, bow and two! Steady!' is the cox.'s response.

'Ten seconds left.' The tension is becoming painful. 'Five!' 'Four!' 'Three!' 'Two!' 'One!' Bang goes the starting gun. The coxswains drop the chains, and the whole reach is suddenly alive, as one hundred and twenty oars flash into the water on the instant, and fifteen shrieking crowds yell at the top of their voices as they tear along the bank.

The third stroke sees full way on all the boats, and they rush along up the straight as hard as they can go.

Emmanuel and Pembroke have tried conclusions on the previous night, and though the former have kept away, it was only by a diminished interval, and then, as the older hands remembered with some misgiving, Pembroke had no one behind them to shove them along, as Corpus are sure to do to-night, for they are elated with victory, and confident of success. All agree that it must be a faster rowed race to-night; none dare predict the result. Meyrick is swinging steadily, and shooting his hands out sharply as he recovers from his long stroke; and Tom is swinging with him like a machine, while the words, 'I'm sure you'll win,' are ringing in his ears.

Post Reach is always trying, especially when the pace is fast from the start, nerves and blood-vessels are not strung up to their work, and, before First Post Corner is reached, it seems as if one could go no further, but that feeling soon passes off. 'We've gained half a length; but they are rowing half a stroke slower,' whispers Symonds, the cox., to Meyrick, as they keep along close under the bushes preparatory to making the shoot into the Gut. Meyrick keeps his eye on the Corpus men, who have gained at least a length, and are making their light Tyne-built ship fly through the water. They are rowing a fast stroke, but have amply proved their staying power on previous nights. Meyrick keeps on steadily at the same rate round First Post Corner, and the Corpus men seem to get terribly near, as they are running free long after the Pembroke boat has felt the drag of the rudder. Symonds brings them round with not an inch to spare between the blades and the bank, and gives a nod to

Meyrick as soon as they are straight, and the crew responding to the increase of a stroke, make the boat shoot forward as the rudder is taken off. Up the Gut they race, getting nearer and nearer to Emmanuel, who are already rounding Grassy, evoking frantic yells of delight from their partisans on the towpath.

It is hard work for bow and three round the sharp turn, but it does not last long, and when the boats get straight into the Plough Reach, the Emmanuel stroke is bound to confess that they have lost at least a length, although he has been getting all the pace out of his crew of which they are capable, remembering that it is still a far cry to Chesterton.

Plough Reach, for some reason, always seems to be dead up hill; but it comes to an end at last, as the clamour on the bank increases, and the roar from the crowd at Ditton seems like a faint hum in one's ears.

Corpus have never slackened their stroke, and are slashing along in the same jaunty way as when they started, and their partisans on the bank are wild with excitement.

Look for a moment at that crowd—you won't see its like elsewhere. Talk of the excitement when a favourite wins the Leger! it's nothing to it; for downright genuine enthusiasm, give me a crowd of undergrads when their boat is racing to make its bump.

Such a frantic screaming mass of men in blazers of every hue, and mostly bare to the knee, jostling one another as if their lives depended on their getting forward. Here and there a don or a bookworm in black coat, and armed with an umbrella, is hurrying along, having caught the enthusiasm; while the cased colours of the boats are borne aloft, and a stalwart band keep a clear course for the captain, who bears the magic rattle which shall call his men to strain every nerve in a last effort for victory. Look again at the crews—those flushed faces and open mouths tell of the strain on wind and muscle. The patient coach, who has spent three months in teaching four to keep his elbow in to his side, and bow not to double up over his oar at the finish, will be able to gauge to a nicety how much has been taken out of them by the way they are relapsing into their old faults. A steady call of the old warning voice may reach their ears as they hug the towpath round Ditton, and pull them into shape again.

The interest of the race centres in the three boats which are coming up the Plough Reach. Emmanuel have put on another

stroke, seeing they could not keep away from Pembroke round Grassy, and are rowing harder than they have ever done before. Still, they escaped last night, and have no cause for despair, though the pace has been a turn faster throughout. Pembroke and Corpus are both doing their utmost at thirty-nine strokes a minute, with the latter gaining fast, when the Pembroke ship feels the rudder as she begins the long, dragging bend round Ditton Corner into the Long Reach.

Symonds had held well out on the Plough side before pulling his string to cross over, and so appears to lose a trifle on Emmanuel, who are barely a length in front of them. As they cross over, the Corpus cox. makes a dash for the corner, and his crew rise to the occasion with a spurt, as yells of triumph go up from the cherry coloured crowd. The gap decreases rapidly, and the Corpus boat seems to leap through the water. Meyrick would fain drop a stroke or two, and take a pull at his crew if he dare; but the full stress of the pace is on them, and they must race round the long bend with the rudder throwing up jets of spray in answer to each stroke of the oars. He dare not slow down, and cannot quicken without pulling his crew to pieces, so he keeps slogging on at the same long swinging stroke which he has set throughout. The strain is terrible, and Tom feels as if his head must burst. He is too seasoned now and in too hard condition to feel the horrible aching he felt in his stomach in his first race; but there is a stinging, smarting pain in the muscles of his forearm which is a warning that there is not much left.

Neither boat can gain an inch now; but the pace is telling on some of the weaker members of all the crews, and the 'cluck' of the oars in the rowlocks as they leave the water is not so distinct as it was. Emmanuel are splashing a bit, but still going very strong. Just on the point of the corner three in the Pembroke boat hits the water, and cuts the beginning of his next stroke, causing the boat to roll heavily. There is a general splash, and cox. takes the rudder off to allow the boat to right itself, which it does in an instant, but that moment's flurry lets up Corpus to within a quarter of a length.

Their captain on the bank takes a glance at his crew, and, with a view halloa, which rings out far above the shouting, springs his rattle. The crew responds to it like a racehorse to the whip, but the sound is heard by Pembroke as well, and they answer spurt with spurt as they fly round the last of the

bend, and the Long Reach opens before them. Their rudder is off first, and they gain a foot or so, and, pulling themselves together, settle down to do or die. 'I'm sure you'll win,' is ringing in Tom's ears, as he sets every nerve and muscle to work, not to make a bump, but to avert defeat. Symonds fixes his eye on the further pier of the railway bridge, and steers straight for it, resolutely refraining from trying to get a glimpse of that sharp, wicked-looking bow which is jumping along so close to his rudder. Every stroke seems an age of agony, the maddened crowd on the bank are dancing with excitement, but their shouts fall on ears that are dead, and can only hear the cluck of the oars at the finish of each stroke.

Donaldson, the hero of a hundred races, is carrying the Pembroke rattle, and enduring, if he only knew it, a huge amount of obloquy from the spectators by keeping it quietly at his side. His eyes are scanning each man in the crew, and watching to see how much more they can bear. A smile is on his clear, hard face, as he sees how well they are lasting, and how truly cox. is holding his course. All three boats are heading now directly up the reach, but Emmanuel have let the Pembroke crew get inside them, and have fallen away a little towards the Willows. The temptation to follow them is excessive, but Symonds has been at the game far too often not to know that they must come back on to the true course in order to clear the piers of the bridge, so he holds on as if there were no other boat on the river. 'They'll stay a bit longer,' thinks Donaldson to himself, as he turns from his own men to have a look at Corpus. They are rowing forty-two now; but some of their oars have got a bit scratchy, and they cannot diminish the two feet which separates them from the rudder in front.

So the race wears on past the Willows and up towards the ditch. Just before reaching the latter, Corpus make a final effort in response to a whistle from their captain, and spring up till their nose is level with the Pembroke rudder. A hundred yards more, and they have overlapped at least a foot, and Symonds, catching sight of the nose over his shoulder, is rejoiced to see that it is two feet on his right. Meyrick spurts as the Corpus cox. touches his string, and Tom, realising the situation, though he is conscious of little else than a series of gold and green spots floating in a pink haze, puts in all he knows, and the Corpus bow passes six inches clear of their stern as they shoot forward, and in a moment there are two feet of daylight

between the boats as the *Corpus cox.* puts up his rudder to prevent his boat swinging too far after missing the bump.

The Mellors party in the carriage are watching with the utmost interest, and Kitty is leaning forward breathlessly, her eyes flashing with excitement as she gazes, for the spirit of racing has seized upon her, and Robson's voice seems to jar on her ear as he exclaims, 'A precious near thing that. Just look at Landor! he's a festive object, isn't he?' In truth they were none of them festive objects, for the agony of that desperate effort showed plainly in their faces.

It takes *Corpus* scarce a moment to recover themselves, and they dash on once more, gamely answering to the call made on them, and again the gap is rapidly lessened. But meantime *Pembroke* have gone on with undiminished speed, and now *Donaldson's* rattle is sounding furiously, while a mighty whoop from their friends on the bank reaches the ears of the jaded crew. The effect is like an electric shock, every back stiffens up, and the haze fades from Tom's eyes as eight sets of teeth are clinched for their last effort. *Emmanuel* have had to come in towards them in order to clear the railway bridge, having held on to the last moment in hopes of a bump being made behind them, and have to contend against a good deal of rudder in consequence.

The spurt of *Pembroke* brings them up to within a foot, but *Corpus* are coming up with a rush, and once more are overlapping as they pass under the bridge. The excitement is intense as the *Pembroke* nose creeps alongside the canvas of the *Emmanuel* boat, but *Symonds*, who sits still, as pale as death, dare not touch a string to make the bump as the *Corpus* nose is jumping along close to him, overlapping by a foot or more, and well he knows that the smallest check to their speed would bring *Corpus* upon them.

All three crews are rowing about forty-four, and the pace is too hot to last. Which will crack soonest? Tom feels as if each stroke were his last, when all of a sudden, as his oar leaves the water, he feels a slight thrill, which is followed by a yell from *Symonds*, and a decided jar, as the *Pembroke* nose runs up to stroke's rigger, and the *Emmanuel cox.* holds up his hand to acknowledge his defeat. Tom has just time to put out his hand and fend off the nose of *Corpus*, who are into them in an instant, ere they drift into the bank in a state of collapse.

Pembroke was in a state of wild disorder that night. Such

a bump supper had never been seen, even in the memory of the decrepit old porter, who stood in the entrance of his lodge, feebly saying, 'Dear, dear, those boys!'

Tom tried to slip away as early as he could, in order to go round to the Mellors, but was detected in the act, and seized upon by the rest, and made to join the mad ring of men who were dancing round a bonfire which was speedily blazing in the centre of the court.

The Dean in vain tried to quiet the riot, but soon gave it up as useless, and far into the night the uproar might have been heard half-way up King's Parade.

Tom started as soon as he had finished breakfast to call on the Mellors, and was surprised to see Robson driving to the station with his luggage on the box. 'Didn't know he was going so soon; but it's a good job. I hate the fellow,' was his reflection to himself.

Tom spent a morning of unalloyed happiness in the company of the fair Kitty, a morning so much to their mutual satisfaction that he went back to his rooms to prepare for the boat procession with the proud feeling that he had, indeed, won a prize far higher and more enduring than the honour of being Head of the River.

THE MOUNTED POACHERS.

A TRUE STORY. *By* R. M. ALEXANDER.

IT was in November 1804, that a troop of the —th Light Dragoons was sent down to the usually quiet town of Portcastle to keep order during the time of the elections. The officers consisted of Captain Blundellpore, Lieutenant Henry Tracey, and Cornet Julian Trevor St. Aubyn. After they had been quartered there a few days, Captain Blundellpore got leave of absence owing to a family bereavement, and Lieutenant Henry Tracey found himself in command, a position he did not particularly relish, as he hated anything in the way of responsibility, and being an exceptionally lively, hare-brained young sportsman, caring nothing for politics (it being all the same to him whether Sir Geoffrey Plantagenet Vere de Montmorency, of Montmorency Castle, or Mr. Josiah Binks, the retired pork-butcher, represented the county in Parliament, and the chances of these two illustrious candidates

at the forthcoming election forming the sole thought and topic of conversation of everyone else), he found the old town of Port-castle exceedingly dull.

With the exception of a daily stroll through the market place, and spending money on things not wanted, in shops where a pretty girl served behind the counter (not following the advice of the old Scotch Laird to his son, 'If ye see a bonnie lassie in a shop that ye want tae speak to, dinna waste your good siller, but just gang in and ask change for a threep'ny bit'), there was nothing whatever to while away the time with.

One night, sitting alone after dinner with Julian, having exhausted his vocabulary of expletives concerning the stupidity and dullness of the inhabitants, &c., a happy thought suddenly struck him, something that would for the moment break the monotony of their existence.

'I'll tell you what we'll do, Julian, an old sportsman of the name of Willowby lives about twelve miles from here in a very deserted district, he has splendid shooting, as I know, having been down shooting with my uncle, whose property adjoins his. He never asks a soul to shoot with him, but does it all himself, with his keepers, and sends every bit of fur and feather to market, so we will shoot his best coverts for him this time, my boy, what do you think of *that*?'

'How on earth are you going to manage it?' asked Julian.

'Leave it to me,' answered Tracey; 'all I want of you is to keep your tongue quiet and do what I tell you.'

The next morning Tracey instructed his servant to go into the town and buy fourteen smock-frocks and hats of the yokel type to match, telling him at the same time, not to buy them all at one shop, so as to avoid giving rise to any sort of suspicion. He then went on to parade, and after going through the customary inspection of the troop, before dismissing them, called the troop sergeant-major on one side, and told him he wanted besides himself, twelve picked men, and the trumpeter, on the best jumping horses in the troop, in undress without arms or accoutrements, to be ready at daybreak the following morning, for special duty!

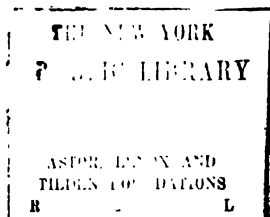
The sergeant-major, an old soldier, and a favourite with the officers, saluted, and moved off, muttering to himself, 'I wonder what devilment he is up to now,' well knowing the character of his superior officer.

As the first streaks of dawn appeared through the windows



W. Alexander

off they all scampered, waving
the spoils of the chase over their
heads.



of Tracey's room, the blinds of which had been pulled up to admit them, he was awakened by his servant saying the men were falling in for special duty. Julian at the same moment appeared at the door, stretching his arms and doing his best to dislocate his jaws with yawning. 'Look sharp and dress, Julian,' shouted Tracey, jumping out of bed, 'and bring me your gun, powder-flask and shot belt—*full*, mind you; we will send on our things in the dog-cart with my servant, to meet us three miles out of the town.'

Twenty minutes later found a detachment of Dragoons, commanded by two officers in mufti, trotting merrily along a by-road, leading from Portcastle to Welldale, the small village near which was situated the estate of Charles Godolphin Willowby, Esq. The topic of conversation among the troopers being the unknown special duty they were bound for, without arms or accoutrements!

When they had covered nearly three miles, they halted at the cross roads, under the finger post of which they found the dog-cart, which had preceded them.

Tracey wheeled the detachment into line, and addressed them thus:—

'Now, boys, I'm going to show you some fun, and I hope I can trust the lot of you to hold your tongues over the affair. I am going to shoot some woods belonging to an old gentleman about nine miles from here, in fact, in plain words, I'm going to poach' (broad grins of satisfaction appeared on the faces of the troopers); 'so now I want you to put on the smocks and hats you will be provided with, and each man arm himself with a good long stick for beating, and be as quick as possible. Fall out!'

In a few minutes, the smocks and hats being served out from the dog-cart, the little detachment of smart dragoons was transformed into a band of mounted country bumpkins. A roar of laughter went up from all as they were formed into fours and the command given to 'trot.'

After nearly an hour's ride, Tracey sung out 'Halt,' and told a trooper to open a gate leading into a field, on the far side of which was a sporting looking covert of about seventy acres.

The trumpeter was sent to the top of a hill about a quarter of a mile off, with instructions to sound the alarm if anybody in the shape of a keeper should appear in sight, and then rejoin the rest of the party as hard as he could gallop.

At the edge of the wood the men were ordered to dismount

and tie up their horses to the rails, three troopers being left in charge, while Tracey and Julian with the rest plunged into the covert, and spread out into skirmishing order. They were soon at work, 'bang,' 'bang,' rang out in quick succession on the crisp frosty air, down came pheasant after pheasant, with an occasional 'cock.' The troopers were wild with excitement, and it was difficult to keep them in check. When a rabbit broke cover, they all went after it in hot pursuit, tumbling over each other, laughing, shouting, and swearing, in fact the covert was turned into a veritable pandemonium.

When they had beaten about half the wood, 'Halt,' roared Tracey, as 'the alarm' sounded clear and sharp from the adjacent hill, and the trumpeter was seen tearing down for all he was worth.

'Retire, and as hard as you can lick!' was the next word of command. Crashing through the underwood the horses were soon reached and mounted, each man being heavily laden with game of all sorts.

They were just in time, as round the edge of the wood appeared half a dozen stalwart keepers, and a number of farm hands armed with heavy sticks and pitch forks.

'Let's fight 'em,' sung out Julian.

Tracey hesitated, with a wild and eager look in his eye, but the sergeant-major, hearing the suggestion, came up, and gravely saluting said, 'Beg pardon, sir, but for heaven's sake don't, as the regiment may be identified by the men's overalls.'

Tracey saw the wisdom of this, and gave the word to gallop. Off they all scampered, waving the spoils of the chase over their heads, and followed their senior officer, who gave them a line across country, with Julian bringing up the rear.

The keepers pulled up in utter bewilderment when they saw a crowd of country bumpkins vaulting into the saddles of well-groomed chargers.

This class of poacher they were entirely unacquainted with, anyhow, they *were* poachers, so off they started in hot pursuit, with the expectation of seeing some of them come to grief at the fences, but no such luck; being mounted on picked horses, they got clean off, and actually had the coolness to shoot another covert about three miles off, where they were unmolested, the shots at the first wood having attracted all the keepers to it, who were now swearing heavily each time they heard the faint echo of the guns in action in the distance.

The dog-cart was again met on the return journey, into which was piled the game, smocks, &c., and the detachment once more resumed its normal aspect. The little mess was well supplied with game for some time afterwards, and many of Tracey's and Julian's friends benefited by the escapade.

The mounted poachers were the talk of the county for many a long day, and old Willowby, mean as he was, would have given something handsome to have laid hold of them.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

By 'AN OLD TURFITE.'



HOUGH dark below this van appears,
It holds within a racer (ray, Sir) !
Of no slight brilliancy, indeed,
Which will be claimed by "Day," Sir !

is a verse of an old sporting rhyme which carries racing men back to the days before the shriek of the railway whistle was ever heard, and Cotherstone was a name to conjure with. These were the times, indeed, when 'nobbling' was a profession as skilfully arranged as touting at Newmarket is at the present day; and the old regal rule of making the Cup-bearer drink before the King was, in anxious periods, rigorously carried out in training stables, the lad in charge of the favourite having to swallow half a pint of cold water before he held the pail to his horse's head. Trainers' cares were quite as anxious as they are now, though the fierce light that beats upon racehorses as well as thrones through newspaper reports at present was at that time, if not unknown, kept pretty well under a bushel. Their difficulties lay frequently in the getting of a horse sound and well to the course from the training ground, and so the old racing van—a vehicle not unlike the present well-known Bow Street conveyance (well known to our readers externally only, we hope)—was invented. Set on low wheels, so that the horse might walk into it as easily as into a stall, it was possibly the actual parent of the present railway horse-box, though rarely if ever fitted to carry more than the one animal. Carefully fastened inside of this, with the stable lad at its head and a couple of daredevil fellows standing on the step of the door behind, a horse stood in little

danger of being interfered with by any maliciously disposed person in the employ of unscrupulous individuals who had betted large sums against it—and yet, as our story will show, there *was* danger.

It was on the evening before the Derby day of 184— that one of these carefully guarded vans drew up at the door of an old-fashioned Surrey inn, where a similar van had for some time been standing. It was a dusty May day, hot in the sun and cold in the shade, and the berry-brown ale of the good little red-tiled house seemed to be warmly appreciated by the men in charge of the first vehicle, whose attire and language readily proclaimed them to be all the way from Yorkshire.

‘It’s rather a dryish sort o’ day for drivin’, beant it, lads?’ said the chief of the ‘tykes’ to the driver of the second van; ‘how far may thou hast coom, lad?’

‘We have come from a place that’s far beyont thy askin’,’ said the new comer coolly, as if not inclined to be dragged into conversation.

‘Humph!’ said the other, ‘I scarcely thinght it was far as that.’

‘Far as what?’ said the other, off his guard.

‘The country where there’s nowt o’ civility and good manners; but I suppose ye’ll be bound, like oursenns, for Epsom, and ye think, na doot, as ye’ve something like as is a flier, and does not want like to let it be known.’

‘If it’s a fair question, what have you got in your own?’ was the response to this.

‘Just a poor dead colt, to feed the hounds,’ was the reply; ‘wilt thou buy him? Here, man, have a quart wi’ me, and let’s be friends, we all go the same road. So let’s stop argifyng. Got anything good in thy cart? Favourite, eh!’

‘That’s for you to find out, my clever Yorkshireman; but just thou go and try and see by putting thy eye through the keyhole, and maybe thou’lt think thou hast had enough of it.’

‘Dang thee! is that the way thou talks? Well, I’ll lay thee five pounds that I’ll race mine again’ thee, wheel for wheel, for a five good guineas. There’s a handy, nice bit o’ level road before us; thou has two good-looking tits in thy waggon, and I has as spankin’ a pair o’ Cleveland bays as ever was bred in Yorkshire.’

‘Done, then, with you, for five guineas; I have as good a pair o’ Norfolk cobs as ever drew a waggin, and I’ll race them

against you any day, so just post your money with the landlord here. I know him to be an honest sort, and he can come on that cob o' his that's standing there saddled in the yard and see fair play.'

The Yorkshireman put down his money on the counter, and the man who accepted his wager did the same, his friends all the time protesting vigorously. 'Dost thou know what thou'st after, thou fool? That's the flyest man in Yorkshire that you've made your bet with, and something no' very canny will happen. Wilt thou take our horse outside, for you know that is about as much as our jobs are worth?'

It was no use reasoning against him, however, for it was, as the old saying has it, 'a wilful man must have his way'—or, as the Scotch put it, 'he that will to Cupar must to Cupar.'

'Hey, art thou ready, lad?' cried the burly Yorkshire tyke, taking his place as driver on the front seat of the van. 'You must not keep us all day waiting, for we must get the "crack" to Epsom before the sun goes down.'

'Saddling bell's rung!' said the landlord facetiously from the back of the cob on which he had just swung himself. 'You must be smart in getting to the post. I'll see you finish fairly at the second milestone, and first there will get the stakes, fair or foul. I'll have no argifying.'

'There will be one o' them will no' get there if I can help it!' said the Yorkshireman quietly to his mates, with a sly wink. 'I ha' been taking stock o' his van, and I think I'll manage it, five guineas and all.'

'What hast thou done, thou old rogue; I saw thee at some game about the wheels?' asked one of his mates from behind.

Ere an answer could be given both vans went off with a cracking of whips through a cloud of dust, the landlord keeping close up on the grassy portion of the highway. For a long time the Cleveland bays proved the superior, but whether from the weight of the horse inside or the broader wheels of the van, which was more substantially built than the southern one, it was not very easy to determine. The whip lashes were applied unsparingly on both teams, and now and then gave out 'cracks' like pistols, whilst the men on the step shouted all the words they knew generally used in the encouragement of horses to use their best speed. When the first milestone had been reached the Clevelands were evidently almost beat, and the Yorkshireman began to look very green.

'Dang me!' he said to the man on the step, 'I never saw such a thing afore. I must stop driving for a bit and try another game than this, or my five guineas are as good as in t'other man's pocket.'

Suiting his action to his words, he eased his horses, and allowed his competitor to draw ahead a little. Then all at once, when his sturdy Clevelands had got a mouthful of wind, he rushed them to the front, and the tussle was recommenced in earnest. Up, up, and up the Northern van gradually drew, till its near fore-wheel grazed the off fore-wheel of the Southern vehicle. There was a shout, and a yell, and a flashing of sparks, and, with a wheel off, the leading van rolled over on its side, whilst yells of murder came from the lad at the horse's head in the interior.

'Let them alone, landlord,' cried the Yorkshireman triumphantly; 'drive on to the milestone and pay me over my ten guineas. That might as well ha' been my luck as his'n, and the conditions were—first at the two-mile post, foul or not.'

The milestone was not very far off, and the landlord, dismounting, rung down each guinea on its top to the satisfaction of the winner, and then galloped back to the assistance of the unfortunates; while the other, retaking his seat, drove off at leisure, and seemingly as unconcerned as if nothing had happened.

* * * * *

Two days afterwards the backers of a certain dark horse for the Derby were most disagreeably surprised to learn that it had been badly injured through the breaking down of the van while on its way to the course. The owner knew nothing about it, and all the trainer could say was that a wheel had come off and that the horse had been cast on its side, and had severely twisted itself in some way in its struggles. Some men from the North laughed in their sleeves in the paddock when they heard of it, but said nothing. If they had cared to speak out, possibly some grooms, helpers, and stable lads there would have had a bad time of it. Shortly after the meeting was over the Yorkshire van, on its return journey, halted at the old Surrey inn, where the driver wished to stand treat to the landlord.

'I say,' said the latter, with a sly wink, 'it was a mighty queer thing that when we had got that ere van you tripped up back on to its wheels we could not find the off fore lynch-pin!'

'I has na doot!' said the Yorkshireman, smiling into his quart of pewter; 'they lynch-pins goes amissing most vexatiously at some time or another.'

'Yes,' said the landlord, 'more especially when you Yorkshiremen are about; but I think it was scarcely fair of you to take the man's money, all the same.'

'What do you mean? It was a fair enough bet!'

'Fair enough; but it was foul play, for my missus from the window saw you take the lynch-pin out and put it into your pocket, and if the wheel hadn't been pretty well fixed on the axle it wouldn't have gone a hundred yards!'

'Well, it went far enough to give my guineas a fright anyway, and if I hadn't got up in that last lap I would have lost my money. However, if he comes this way, there's his lynch-pin and a guinea, and tell him next time he drives a good horse in a van to have nothing to do with anybody, let alone run races, and he'll get on. I'm an old hand at the game, and if I haven't ridden winners I've driven them many a mile.'

So saying he took his seat and drove off, singing—

While jockeys vain do struggling strive,

We rattle down the road, Sir!

They ride the favourite, but we drive

Him to his new abode, Sir!

We weigh in at each tavern door,

Then on again go spinning;

And till at last our journey's o'er,

Past each mile post are winning.

Now, who I pray can make him stay,

As he stays in the van, Sir!

Or make him wait at turnpike gate,

As jockey never can, Sir!

We never use a spur or whip,

For such mild ways are sinning;

But every time we're on the trip,

Past each mile post are winning.

BALLANTINE'S BUNKER.

A GOLFING STORY BY 'ROCKWOOD.'



OW is it you have come to call the third last hole we played to-day, a bunker? It has often puzzled me reading it in the papers that So-and-so had won Ballantine's Bunker, or halved Ballantine's Bunker, or was dormy at Ballantine's Bunker. Now, Ballantine's Bunker is one of the grandest putting greens on the links. I suppose it once was a bunker, and you have turfed it over and converted it into what it is now.'

'No! no! nothing of the kind. Ballantine's Bunker was never anything but what it is now so far as appearance is concerned, save that the grass has been shortened and the green clipped a little. Of course it has been made a hole, with the regulation which requires that the course should be altered on medal days. It was a little off the course at times owing to an open drain, which has now been covered over. It's an old story, and there are very few but myself able to tell it; indeed, you are about the first stranger to whom it has ever occurred to ask the question. It was in the early days of our club, when rules and regulations were not very clearly laid down, the green not very well kept, and folks allowed pretty much to do as they like, for it was all common land. Would you care to hear it; if so, fill your pipe?'

The Laird of Dumbuck flung me over his tobacco-pouch as he spoke. I charged my pipe, and, fully coaled up, as a steam-boat stoker would say, prepared to hear what, told in the Laird's best manner, formed a very interesting golfing narrative.

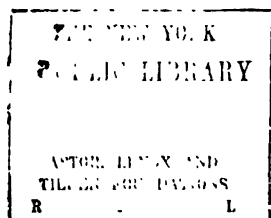
'I suppose Ballantine was a rival laird?' I ventured to remark.

'A rival laird! Oh! bless you, no; just the very opposite. The Lord preserve us from all such rivals as Ballantine, though a good many of his sort are claiming the acres nowadays. However, soil for siller is a fair exchange, and if it was not that my heart clings to the auld place, they might have my sandhills to-morrow.

'Successful city merchant, I suppose?'

'Verra,' said the Laird, dryly. 'He failed for thirty thousand





pounds, and paid his creditors wi' thirty threepenny bits. That's a sort of job that men like me are not built to be successful at ; but to my story.

'Ballantine, if ye must know, was a commercial traveller in the ribbon trade, a mere bumptious bagman, who was continually staring at the ladies, impudently as they thought, but who was really all the time taking stock of their bonnets. For a man to be a bachelor, and yet know so much about a lassie's tap gear, was to me, at least, more than astounding. Of course, it was in the man's trade.'

'And he had no heart above his business, Laird ; none of these successful bagmen ever have.'

'To tell you the truth, I don't think the man had a heart at all. However, one day on the links here, whether it was the bonnet or whether it was the face or not, he met in wi' something that fairly burst the buttons o' his waistcoat. Something that completely knocked him off his putting and his driving for a week. He met something warmer by-and-by, ha ! ha ! ha !'

Here the Laird burst into a loud fit of laughter, apparently with full recollection of the circumstances.

'Then she turned out a regular Tartar, I suppose, and'——

'She ! nothing of the kind, man ; the lassie was a daughter of old John McNab, the village schoolmaster, as bonnie a quiet lassie as was to be met with in the whole west country-side ; but her father had no sympathy with golf, none whatever. It was a game, he said, for downright idle people, and he never could understand how ministers could be allowed to indulge in it. Moreover, he declared it to be a great barrier to education, seeing that the caddies were kept off their lessons when carrying clubs to the gentlemen. In this there was force and reason so far as weekday play was concerned ; but as most of the play was then on Saturdays, nobody thought much about it. The schoolmaster was a real decent man, everybody said ; but he should not say anything against golf, simply because he could find no pleasure in it himself. Well, Ballantine, as I have said, was fair dead struck with Meenie McNab, and as he was reputed to be very rich, everybody thought it would be a grand match for the Dominie's daughter. So did the Dominie's wife ; but old John McNab did not seem to be very much concerned about it himself.'

'No doubt, Laird, he had made the wise resolution never to let his daughter marry a golfer. He could not have been far

out in that, any way, for, so far as I have seen, the cares of matrimony sit lighter on golfers than any one else.'

'Speak for yoursel', fren'. I've been a golfer for forty-five years, the other game I have no' tried yet and am not likely to; but it was not the golfing he objected to so much, as the bumptious style of the man himsel'. The Dominie had no ambition so far as vulgar display of riches was concerned; on the other hand, his wife's great idea was to see her daughter driving in her carriage and pair. As to Meenie, simple girl, she had no idea of ever being big in the world at all, and she received Ballantine's addresses simply because her mother commanded her to do so. Some folks who were wiser than others, knew that the lassie was very fond of another, who was a native of the village, and an old playmate in her father's school.'

'Not a caddie, I hope, Laird, or your Ballantine's Bunker story will become a melodrama.'

'Mellow drams or mild and mellow drams, like the Cleekum Inn whiskey, I'll no' say, but I'll let ye heer the upshot if ye wait a little.'

'Ballantine had been a good deal about the green all spring, after having been away on his winter journey as he called it. In the month of July he reappeared again, after being absent all May and June. He was, as usual, eloquent about his travels, the strange sights he had seen, and the large amount of business he had succeeded in doing for his firm, of which he was the travelling partner. That he meant to pop the question to Miss McNab that night, and ask the consent of the Dominie, was evident. As events turned out, he was not allowed to do either. Just a few days before he appeared a ship came into the harbour, in which there was more than an ordinary interest, for the Captain, the chief mate, and most of the crew, were natives of the place. The Captain and the Dominie were old friends and companions, and the chief mate had been one of the old man's favourite pupils, golfer though he was, and one of the best. Perhaps he was as great a favourite with the old schoolmaster's only daughter. Though welcomed back by every one, Willie Glen received no welcome from the Dominie's wife, for what would a sea-captain be compared with a rich Glasgow merchant. At the clubhouse Willie and his rival foregathered, and after the seafaring man had checked a few of the bagman's romances, hitherto uncontradicted, a match between the two was arranged

for the following Saturday. Now, Willie Glen had once been about the best player for his age on our green, but the sea life had twisted him a bit, and he scarcely stood straight up to his ball, whilst his hands had got a bit hard with the ropes. Still, after a few rounds, he got into his old swing, and from the President to the youngest o' the caddies, everybody wanted the chief mate o' the schooner *Annie and John of Cockleburgh* to win.'

'Not forgetting the fair Meenie McNab, Laird.'

'And every other wife and lassie included,' said the Laird, continuing, 'save Mrs. McNab herself, who had grand visions in her head, and thought she saw herself standing by the side of the Leddy Provost o' Glasgow some fine day. Now it happened that John McNab was given to the very commendable pursuit of keeping bees, the "true models of industry," as he used to observe, "every one at work on the links ought to bring a blush to the face of the golfer." I'm afraid some of them did so to the caddies in their ain way at times. But about the bees more by-and-by.

'The chief mate and the bagman swiped off fairly even for driving at eleven o'clock on the Saturday forenoon. The match was a single round of the green, for we had a medal in the afternoon, and the stake, a life subscription—that's five pounds. We had hitherto only been paying annual subscriptions, but Ballantine, being a business man, had drawn out a scale, which allowed of our strengthening the funds by having "paid up" life subscriptions. The sailor, a grand, tall, strapping young fellow, was better in his driving than the bagman, but he was stiff and awkward in his short play, sheerly through want of practice, and he fozzled his putts at times most vexatiously to his followers. The bagman got two up, therefore, in the first three holes. Then Willie Glen got fairly under weigh, and took the next three holes clean off the reel. They halved the next, and started for home, the sailor one up, which the bagman rubbed off. It was fair, good, square golfing after that, both men being on their mettle. Well, when they started to play for the hole ye alluded to, the sailor was up, the game therefore standing, Willie Glen one up and two to play, so it was still any one's match. The sailor had the honour, and drove well, keeping to the left of the ditch I alluded to, and the bagman chose the right—it was his favourite line. I could see the caddies titter as they did so. Playing the like, Ballantine, with

his cleek, dropped his ball neatly over a knoll ; the sailor played one more, and we followed up.

'What was the astonishment of the bagman, and, I must say, I was astonished myself, to find snugly settled as in a flower garden, a bee skep, and the bees busy at work, the whole place around being covered with yellow clover and heather, and hundreds of natural flowers. And there, almost under the wooden legs which supported the hive, was Ballantine's ball. The matter afforded an easy explanation. John McNab, in a well-known Highland fashion, was in the custom of taking his bees out every summer to the clover fields and heathery hillsides, in order to get the honey of a mild, rich flavour, and here was one of his hives stuck right on the edge of the golfing-course.

"I suppose I may lift my ball," he said, after it had been explained to him who was responsible for placing the hive there.

"With the usual penalty," said the sailor.

"But it's a movable obstruction."

"Then you had better move it," was the cool answer.

'It seemed a case of lost hole under any circumstances ; but the bagman was not going to lose it, and most likely the match, without an effort, so putting on his gloves, hauling close down his wristbands, and covering his head over with a handkerchief, he ventured close up to the hive and asked his caddie to coach him as to the position of the ball, which he wished to play clear with his iron. The latter did so very honestly, so far as we could see, though we were all holding a wide berth. The bagman played, missed the ball, and struck one of the supports, almost upsetting the hive, and bringing the bees forth buzzing and furious. He made a second attempt, and then came running clear, the bees following him, and just as he did so he met the infuriated Dominie, who had just strolled up in time to witness the performance. Growling out anathemas against foolish idlers daring to distress harmless and industrious workers, he took off the handkerchief from the bagman's face, and, forcibly taking the iron from him, broke the shaft across his back. Possibly the presence of the Dominie appeased the anger of the bees, but not before they had left their marks on poor Ballantine's face. It was a laughable scene, yet a pitiful one, and the generous-hearted sailor offered to declare the hole halved. But the bagman had had sufficient golf for one day, and quite enough on our green, for he never came back. Willie Glen

has long been married to Meenie McNab, and is captain of a Transatlantic steamer. A life member of our club, he comes down at times whilst in port for a round, and nobody enjoys a quiet chuckle more than he does when he comes to the hole which the caddies from that day to this dubbed Ballantine's Bunker.'

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.

THREE works have recently been published by Thomas D. Morison, of Glasgow, that will be of interest to sportsmen. *Wild Sports of the West of Ireland*, by W. H. Maxwell, treats of fishing, shooting, ottering, deer stalking, coursing, &c., and recalls pleasant days spent by fell and flood. Many of the tales and legends are thrilling, and possess more than ordinary interest; and if an affirmative answer cannot always be given to the common query of 'Is it true?' one feels they are good enough to be true, and that the whole book is engrossing to a degree cannot be denied.

The revised and cheaper edition of *The Angler's Companion*, by Thomas Tod Stoddart, is a 'Handbook to the Art of Angling,' and, although it will appeal to few, save fishermen, these will not only derive amusement, but solid instruction, from a perusal of its pages. It claims to be a standard work on the subject, and, as the author has devoted a large portion of his lifetime to a study of 'the gentle art,' and deals with his subject with obvious experience, the claim must be allowed. The third edition of *The Life of a Foxhound*, by John Mills, will be welcomed as an old friend, and the adventures of those sagacious and experienced hounds, Ringwood and Trimbush will be perused and re-perused with unflagging interest. The graphic description of splendid runs in chapters X. and XII. will delight the hearts of hunting men.

A very readable sporting novel (or story as the author elects to call it), is *Horsley Grange*, by Guy Gravenhil. It embraces a variety of sport, from that which is to be found in the backwoods to the more civilised and better known pursuits of these islands, including hunting and steeplechasing, and if the reader follow

some of the characters to whom he is introduced at the commencement through all their various adventures until they culminate in that old-fashioned result, matrimony, he will admit that the way in which it all comes about is cleverly told, with more than the usual amount of 'go,' and increases in interest to the end. It is published by Chapman & Hall.

Fox Hounds, Forest, and Prairie is the title of a collection of papers which have, for the most part, appeared in the *Field*, this magazine, and other periodicals, by that favourite author, Captain Pennell Elmhirst (Brooksby), and deals with a wide range of subjects connected with sport in his charmingly entertaining manner. 'Indian Sport' with 'Western and Prairie Life' occupy profitably several pages, whilst 'Fox-hunting in Leicestershire and the New Forest' is pleasantly relieved by 'Wild Stag-hunting on Exmoor,' and this, again, by 'Roebuck Shooting on the Rhine.' The illustrations are very good, those by Colonel Marshman being particularly fresh. The publishers are George Routledge & Sons.

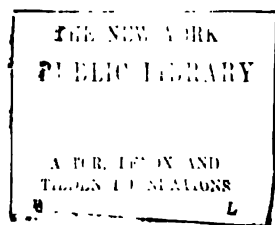
The same firm has issued two other works calculated to interest sportsmen. They are from the pen of Nat Gould (Verax), and are entitled respectively, *The Double Event* and *Running it Off*. As will be readily surmised, they deal with horses and chiefly with the sport of racing. The former is called 'A Tale of the Melbourne Cup,' and both stories are laid in Australia; they abound in strong situations, and are full of well-told and dramatic incidents.



"On the flags at Peterboro."

JOHN ROOSE
AND
"BENT"

FRANKLEY'S BROS
AND
COUGHT-EG MEH



FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

THE HOUNDS OF THE DAY.

PETERBOROUGH, 1892.

By CUTHBERT BRADLEY.

NATURAL man loves hunting; in his primitive state he did but little else, for he had to hunt to live, and of the ancient Briton it has been written that he managed to pass his time by hunting the wolf, beating his wife, and painting himself red. The very sight of a hunt uniform is exhilarating, for, as our friend Jorrocks has it, 'there's no colour like red, no sport like fox-hunting.' Little is it, therefore, to be wondered at that the popularity of the Hound Show held at Peterborough each summer increases year by year, and enlarges its circle of influence from John o' Gaunt to Land's End. Obscure packs of hounds in the extremities of England, which, a few years ago, could boast of no breeding, and had little to commend them in colour or shape, have by these shows a standard of perfection set them, and opportunity of dipping into the best foxhound blood in England, with the beneficial result that they are now competing themselves on the flags at Peterborough.

Haymaking and the General Election thinned not the numbers of those who looked forward to this one day's sight of the hounds during the weary relaxation of the summer months. It came to us like an oasis in the desert amidst the turmoil of party strife and politics. Not that I wish to mix up sport and politics, although the promises given to catch the labouring votes might, if ever they were realised, do much to stop hunting altogether.

The 'three acres and a cow' people, and the small tenant freeholders, would not suffer us across their land in the same way that large-hearted Farmer Broadacres does, thereby main-

taining the true spirit of the chase. Added to this, a country would soon become cramped and unridable with every bedevilment of cheap wire fencing. But we are not amongst those who believe in the practicability of such measures, for when great successes are made by big undertakings, companies, and co-operation, surely agriculture can never stand in these bad times by being put on a different footing to commerce.

But to mount my Pegasus, and 'get forrard' to Peterborough. What a 'deal of human nature' is to be seen gathered round the judging on the flags there. Nestors of the chase sit in close consultation discussing knotty points in hound breeding. The first gentleman in England, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, takes the lead as Patron of the show, and the post of President this year was filled by Mr. Reginald Chandos-Pole, Master of the Cattistock. All the best known faces of our friends in the hunting-field are there, too, giving the show a keen concentrated essence of sport conjoined with a leaven of beauty, for the fair sex of to-day are keen critics of the make and shape of a foxhound.

The next best thing to hunting is talking about it; the oft repeated story of a quick thing with hounds never tires, nay, like good wine, its value and potency increases with the crust of time. We looked in vain this year for the stately forms of Mr. Lane Fox and his friend Colonel Anstruther Thompson, twin Nestors of foxhunting, and in vain, too, for that of Lord Macclesfield, of glorious sporting memory—links which connect our day with the past. The veteran Mr. Tom Parrington, the founder of hound shows, was present, and made a characteristic speech at lunch, which was cheered to the echo. To him belongs the credit of the foxhound shows in the north, in the days when Tom Seabright journeyed from Peterborough with the famous Fitzwilliam hounds, and won honours on the flags at Yarm. Some fifteen years ago it was decided to transfer the show to a more central position for south country sportsmen, and then it was that the present chairman, Mr. William Barford, with commendable foresight, purchased all the portable kennels, and the Hound Show was removed to Peterborough, where it has since flourished. The gathering on Wednesday, the 6th July, was fairly representative of modern foxhunting, with the Marquis of Worcester to remind one of the 'blue and buff' of Badminton; Lord Willoughby de Broke, the glories of Warwickshire; Mr. Merthyr Guest, from the

Blackmore Vale ; Lord Chesham, from the Bicester ; Captain Hugh Browning, from the Oakley ; Mr. Frederick Ames, from the Worcestershire ; Mr. Chandos-Pole, from the Cattistock ; Mr. T. H. Ashton, from the North Warwickshire ; Mr. C. W. B. Fernie, from High Leicestershire ; Captain Prescott Westcar, from the East Kent ; Mr. Gordon Canning, from the Ledbury ; Mr. Miller, from the Vale of White Horse ; Mr. F. Swindell, from the Puckeridge ; Colonel Buchanan, from the Lanark and Renfrewshire ; Major Wickham, from the Fitzwilliam ; Mr. C. B. Seymour, from the West Norfolk ; Mr. E. P. Rawnsley, from the South Wold ; Mr. C. B. E. Wright, from the Badsworth. Sir Reginald Graham, Mr. H. H. Langham, the Marquis of Huntley, the Earl of Westmoreland, Sir Bache Cunard, Mr. J. Fielden, Mr. Percy St. Maur, Mr. Antony Hammond, Mr. Digby-Collins, Major Longstaffe, and a host of the best known names in the hunting field, not forgetting that good sportsman the Rev. Cecil Legard, who undertook the judging of the hunt fox terriers. The tall figure of Plantagenet, like a triton amongst the minnows, a prince amongst writers on sport, whose critical eye has run over the points of more hounds than any man living is a prominent figure at these shows, and his remarks on the celebrities of the packs of the United Kingdom in *Land and Water* will become history.

The cheery spots of pink marking the hunt servants at one end of the judging ring give a character to the scene, and a contrast to the weather-beaten forms who have ridden many a season close up to hounds. Many are there in *mufti*, and quaint is the talk as they stand round and pass judgment on the awards and merits of the winners. Amongst them is the familiar form of Tom Whitmore, who begins to look as if he had been out in a snowstorm or two, and a great day it is for the Oakley, who never return from Peterborough without honours. Will Goodall with the Pytchley white collar is a replica of his father, old Goodall, the celebrated Queen's huntsman. Tom Firr, of the Quorn, is perhaps the tallest figure amongst the huntsmen, and no man is quicker away with his hounds on the line of a fox from a Leicestershire field with a Niagara-like rush thundering behind. Cheery Jim Goddard, the smartest of whips, with the musical voice, whom we knew so well, when he whipped-in to the Cottesmore, and afterwards became huntsman to Lord Lonsdale. Frank Gillard was there in *mufti* looking pleased every time he saw a bit of Belvoir catch the judge's eye.

Ben Capell, the smart young huntsman from the Blankney. Natty looking John Boore, all wire and whipcord, and decorated in every button-hole with the winning ribbons of the Warwickshire beauties, and C. Littleworth, with the slashing Cheshire bitches who always win honours at Peterborough. We missed the tall figure of Old George Carter, who swept the board of prizes with the far-famed Fitzwilliam—he has joined the great majority, and the kennel is seldom now seen competing on the flags, though his old whipper-in, Fred Paine, carries the horn in his stead.

The show was, as we have said, the most representative one, if not quite the largest, that we have ever seen at Peterborough, for twenty-three packs competed, there being eighty-eight and a half couple of hounds, against sixty last year. The judging was undertaken by Mr. E. P. Rawnsley, Master of the Southwold, the Lincolnshire farmers' pack, and Mr. C. B. E. Wright, late Master of the Badsworth, wearing a low-crowned hat, roomy coat, and tight plaid continuations.

These gentlemen began their arduous duties at ten o'clock in the morning, and stuck to their task until late in the evening, a very heavy day's work and a responsible one, but in such competent hands few mistakes were made.

NAME OF PACK.	MASTER.	HUNTSMAN.	COUPLE.
Bicester & Warden Hill	Lord Chesham.....	W. Wilson, k.h.....	1
Blankney	Major Tempest	Ben Capell.....	3
Bedale	Captain Wilson-Todd...	Fred Holland	$\frac{1}{2}$
Cattistock	Reginald Chandos-Pole, Esq.	J. Sorrell	$2\frac{1}{2}$
Cambridgeshire	Carbery Evans, Esq. ...	Thomas Newman...	1
Cheshire, South	H. Reginald Corbet, Esq.	C. Littleworth, jun.	6
Cleveland	W. H. A. Wharton, Esq.	H. Pacey, k.h.	4
Fernie's, Mr.	C. W. B. Fernie, Esq. ...	C. Isaac.....	5
Holderness	Arthur Wilson, Esq. ...	G. Ash	$2\frac{1}{2}$
Lanark & Renfrewshire	Col. Carrick Buchanan	Harry Judd	$1\frac{1}{2}$
Linlithgow & Sterling- shire.	Adam P. Gross, Esq. ...	N. Cotesworth, k.h.	3
Mackenzie's, Mr. A. ...	Austin Mackenzie, Esq.	W. Jones	4
Norfolk, West	Algernon C. Fountaine, Esq.	R. Pickard.....	3
Oakley	Capt. Hugh Browning...	Tom Whitmore ...	$9\frac{1}{2}$
Pytchley	Earl Spencer, K.G.....	Will Goodall.....	$3\frac{1}{2}$
Quorn	Captain Warner	Tom Firr	8
Southdown	The Hon. C. Brand.....	R. Wadsley	5
Tickham	W. E. Rigden, Esq. ...	Geo. Morgan, k.h.	1
Tynedale	John C. Straker, Esq. ...	Harry Bonner	1
Vale of White Horse (Cirencester).	Earl Bathurst	G. Brown	2

NAME OF PACK.	MASTER.	HUNTSMAN.	COUPLE.
Vale of White Horse (Cricklade).	T. B. Miller, Esq.	H. Goddard	1½
Warwickshire	Lord Willoughby de Broke.	John Boore, k.h. ...	10
Worcestershire.....	Frédéric Ames, Esq....	W. Shepherd.....	5

The Warwickshire drew first blood with Hamlet and Harlequin, one year old hounds, sired by their own hound Hermit, who subsequently proved to be the hero of the day. This couple matched well and showed great quality, beating the Oakley Gay Lad and Day Star who ran second, ten packs competing. This pair did not couple quite so well as the Warwickshire did, although Gay Lad afterwards took a special prize as the best young hound in his class. He is by Cleveland Galopin and a nice young hound of great promise, though we should like him better if he were a little bit neater about the neckcloth.

The Oakley and the Warwickshire again made a duel of it for the best two couple of entered hounds, six packs in all contesting. Tom Whitmore brought two teams to compete, and to him was handed the red ribbon of victory for Ambrose, Dancer, Hamlet, and Sifter, a very level lot when seen together. The Warwickshire were a close second, being unlucky to have a weak string in their team with Rustic, who had to take the place of a better hound who went amiss. Rustic dropped his stern and refused to show himself, although Blore coaxed and wheedled him, and caught hold of the offending feature. The Warwickshire Hermit by Harper, dam Ruthless, next took the red ribbon for the best stallion hound, and the champion cup for the best dog hound in the show. This reversed the order of judging last year, when he was only second to the Oakley 'Bridegroom,' who went unnoticed by the judges this year. Hermit looks a gentleman all over, brim full of fashion, with the most irreproachable shoulders and neck that we have ever seen on a hound, he has beautiful colour and carries his white stern, which shows no feather, rather curled over his quarters. The shortness of his back ribs is his weak point, but he is destined to be a great sire, and his young stock won both in the classes for dogs and bitches. The runner up was the Pythchley Paradox by Warwickshire Harper, a very stylish, shapely hound. For the president's silver cup the Oakley

beat the Warwickshire. This ended the judging of the dog hounds, with honours easy to the Oakley and Warwickshire, namely, three firsts and one second to each pack, with the two remaining seconds to the Pytchley. Lunch at these hound shows is one of the most important events of the day, and a very sporting picturesque scene it presents in the huge marquee, where six hundred people sit down together, with a thin red line up the centre of the tent formed by the huntsmen and whips at one long table. Right royal are the toasts that are drunk, and very racy are some of the speeches, and great is the enthusiasm for sport. Some sporting rhymster sang years ago :

‘And now that bold Reynard we’ve killed
We’ll go back to the Dolphin and dine,
We’ll dip his fore pad in a bumper
And drink my Lord’s health in good wine.
Singing Tally ho! Tally ho!’

so sang the sons of Nimrod in praise of the son of Jove and fair Senide. Peterborough of to-day may be more staid, but not a jot less keen for sport than it was in the good old times. It has been observed that a man is more like the age in which he is born, than he is like his parents, and thank God that it is so! What a troublesome fellow would Squire Western be now in a modern country house, with the customs which obtain in these ‘degenerate days.’ But to hark back to after-lunch speeches. Mr. C. B. E. Wright, M.F.H., in responding to the toast for the Judges, said he looked upon the Peterborough Hound Show as the half-way house between one season and another. Mr. Tom Parrington proposed the President’s health, and said it was twenty-three years since he first proposed to give a prize for foxhounds. The idea was taken up at once, and it delighted him beyond everything to see the show carried on in such a spirit, and with such entire success. The President—Mr. Reginald Chandos Pole, Master of Cattistock—responded with a vigorous speech, in which he said with reference to the evil of wire fencing in a hunting country, ‘I believe the place to get wire taken down is in a market town, and not too early in the morning—after lunch. If you then properly get at a man who puts wire up you are more likely to get him to take it down than by writing angry letters to the papers.’ He con-

cluded with 'Success to foxhunting,' and long might it last in this good old England. The huntsmen and whips got on their hind legs and who-whooped lustily, the toast being drunk with musical honours.

Whilst on the subject it will not be out of place to mention a new step in the right direction introduced by the Burton Hunt, who took the opportunity this summer, on the occasion of the Lincoln County Agricultural show, to invite to a luncheon all the farmers over whose land they hunt, with their wives and daughters. Extending the invitation to the wives and daughters was a smart piece of diplomacy on their part, and should materially reduce the calls on the Poultry Fund, for in poultry grievances the 'Missis' is generally the master over the penates, and we know the effect produced by dropping water even on a stone. The toast list concluded with a call for Tom Whitemore the Oakley huntsman, but the reply came 'Gone away! gone away!' so Tom Firr, the Quorn huntsman, had to respond, and made a very characteristic speech, that carried us in mind to covert side and made us keener for sport than ever.

After luncheon, just to stretch one's legs, a smoke and stroll by the wire-faced kennels erected round the judging ring is soothing as well as instructive. The hounds, with solemn, wistful faces, all on the alert and hungry as hunters—for they are never fed before showing—sit in the straw and send up a chorus, whilst a couple next door fall out, and with savage growls and remonstrances from the whips in charge order is restored. The hunt fox terriers keep up a shrill yap yapping the whole of the time, and jump about as if set on wires.

The keen critics in hound breeding stroll round and compare the young entries' points with those of departed favourites, whose gaps they fill up in the ranks.

'Well, Jim, is old Dashwood still in the kennel?'

'Yes, sir; he's got a constitution of cast iron, and he's sired some whelps this season. He don't run with the pack now, as he's got very deaf, but he has a bit of hunting to himself in the coverts near home, and is as keen for sport as ever!'

'Ah! he was a hound with a beautiful voice, and he never spoke without a purpose.'

'No, sir! he never told no lies; he had a beautiful nose, and could set 'em all right on a cold scenting day. Have you seen his daughter Dimity out?'

'No ; but I can see the old hound's character in the little bitch as she sits there !'

'Dimity ! Dimity ! good beech ! She's always gay and well forrard in her work, and as true as steel.'

'The judges havn't given you a ribbon for her ! How's that, Jim ?'

'Oh, never mind about that, sir ! we shall get them a bit later on, when we start hunting !'

Some may be inclined to question the good of hound shows, and talk about breeding for Peterborough, but this argument will not hold water. A thing of beauty is a joy for ever, and the premier pack of the day, the celebrated Duke of Rutland's hounds, are acknowledged to be the handsomest in England. Hounds from Belvoir improve all other kennels ; and, although this celebrated pack never competes on the flags at Peterborough, it is the Belvoir blood that wins all through. In the Turf world, Newmarket is the centre ; in the hunting world, Belvoir is the fountain head, and the home of the thoroughbred foxhound. The beautiful Belvoir tan and rich colouring, that contrasts so remarkably with the pure white ground, is at once recognisable in a kennel where the blood has been imported ; whilst the mould of form and the thoroughbred appearance are gained without loss of any sterling qualities we look for in the field. We would back a Belvoir hound to be first in the field and on the flags.

The young bitch hounds are taken after lunch, and the Warwickshire and Oakley did not have it all their own way, as they did with the dogs. Very stylish and racy are the little bitches as they show on the flags, and move with a supple and airy grace that captivates the eye at once. Waving their sterns, they look up at their huntsmen, who yoicks and coaxes with bits of biscuit to make them show as well as possible.

For young bitch hounds there was a strong class of seventeen couple, representing twelve packs—the Blankney, the South Cheshire, the Holderness, the Lanark and Renfrewshire, the West Norfolk, the Quorn, the Southdown, the Tynedale, the V. W. H. (Cirencester), the V. W. H. (Cricklade), the Warwickshire, and the Worcestershire. Of these the V. W. H. (Cirencester) won at the first time of asking with Norah and Starlight, two very charming bitches who coupled well, beating the Warwickshire couple, Heedless and Princess, by the prize stallion hound Hermit, and the latter was the prize puppy of her year.

Norah afterwards won the special prize for the V. W. H. as the best hound in her class; she is by Belvoir Nominal, although her colour more inclines to yellow pie than tan; she shows great quality, and stands well on the best of feet and legs.

For the best two couple Mr. Fernie scored a maiden victory with Sociable, Hardy, Sarah, and Network, the Worcestershire being second, beating the Oakley, Pytchley, Quorn, Mr. Fernie's, the Warwickshire, and four other packs.

The Warwickshire Royalty was adjudged the best bitch hound, after a tussle with the Quorn Fragrance—and very racy and airy she was on the flags, though many thought Fragrance the best looking bitch of them all. In the competition in the smaller packs, for the best two couple, the South Cheshire got first and the Blankney second. The Champion Cup for the best three couple of bitch hounds was won by Mr. Fernie's, whilst the Champion Cup for the best bitch hound exhibited in any class was awarded to the South Cheshire Roguish; she is a very beautiful two-year-old daughter of Belvoir Sapphire—Redcap, d.s. Oakley Rhymer, and shows all the characteristics of the beautiful Belvoir blood. The runners up were Quorn Fragrance and Mr. Fernie's Sociable.

This annual show of foxhounds, in conjunction with the Peterborough Agricultural Society Show, is fairly typical of sport and agriculture going hand in hand, and may it always be so is the wish of every sportsman. The success of fox-hunting, we all recognise, entirely depends upon the good-will of agriculture, and when farming is prosperous sport flourishes, for farmers are the backbone of every hunt.

TURNING THE TABLES.

By C. DARCY FRIEL.



TELL you what, old man, if it don't get stopped I shall be a goner—dead, stone broke before a month.' 'So bad as that, Dick?' 'Yes; just that. Look here, Tom,' the speaker went on excitedly, 'I'd give every penny I have in the world to nobble those d——d scoundrels!'

Dick Foster, proprietor of the Empress Club, the principal betting resort of the big manufacturing town of Aireborough,

had, indeed, ample reason for being aggravated. For some time past he had been steadily losing, day after day. No matter what unheard-of outsider got home, Dick was sure to have laid him—sometimes heavily. In addition to the proprietor, there were half-a-dozen other bookmakers who had tables in the club. Three of these, though ostensibly independent, were really in Foster's employ, the others were 'on their own hook.' One of the latter, a man named Denton, betted to considerable money, and was, to some extent, a rival of Foster's. Dick, who had all his wits about him, was not long in coming to the conclusion that most of his losses went into this individual's pocket. The long shots about the unknown outsiders, which had turned up trumps, were always found to have been appropriated by one or other of Denton's 'pals,' and it was a curious fact that these bets were invariably made just a moment or two before the result of the race came through the 'tape.' Only one solution was possible—they knew the winner beforehand. But how?—how? The windows of the club room were all of frosted glass, so that no signals could possibly be made from outside, and the old dodge of a tune played upon a cornet or street-organ was too stale to be tried upon Dick Foster. Some new and ingenious device must have been discovered, and scarcely a day passed that Dick was not 'got at.' Sometimes a 'wrong-un' was backed, evidently as a blind, but the right one was sure to be backed as well. Dick was fairly at his wits' end.

This was the state of affairs when Tom Howarth, an old schoolfellow of Foster's, returned home, after a twelve years' sojourn in South America. He had made his pile in silver, or nitrates, or some of the things that men do make money out of in those outlandish regions, and had come back to Aireborough to settle down and enjoy himself for the rest of his life. It was after dinner in Foster's comfortable dining-room that the book-maker confided his troubles to his old friend.

'But what I can't understand,' observed Howarth, 'is how they get the results before you? You have your wires direct from the course—haven't you?'

'Yes,' replied Dick, 'we have. But, you see, they are wired to us in the ordinary way, and come to the club through the tape. Now, these sharps work the oracle in this way. They have a man on the course, generally a first-rate judge of racing. When there's a close finish, and he has to wait for the judge's placing, he can do nothing; but I need not tell you that many a

race is practically over long before the horses pass the winning-post. Well, this fellow is always on the look-out, and when he spots the winner in this way, he's off to the telegraph office like a shot. His message is first off—a bit of silver will always do that—and arrives here perhaps before the numbers are hoisted on the course. I've known them get the result of a race a quarter of an hour before the regular message. They're continually getting at the outside men in this way; but how the devil they manage to smuggle the news into the club beats me hollow.'

'Then, why don't you stop betting at the exact time fixed for each race?

'Can't be done,' said Dick; 'might as well shut up shop at once. You see, we often don't get the runners before the time of the race, and we're always in full swing betting when the bell rings for the result.' No, I'll keep on a bit longer, and if we can't drop on to their little game somehow, I'll just put the shutters up. I'm not going to let 'em have all I've got!' and Dick angrily rattled the loose coins in his trousers pockets.

Howarth had listened attentively to all that his friend had said, and when he had finished, remained silent for some moments. At length he said—'Dick, this thing interests me. I have nothing particular to do, and it would be good fun to catch these thieves. I'll have a try.'

'I wish to goodness you would, old fellow,' said Dick, earnestly.

'You see,' Tom went on, 'I know scarcely anything of betting men or their ways, but I learned out yonder to use my eyes and my ears, and unless these beggars have got hold of something quite out of the common, it'll go hard if I don't find them out.'

Dick seized him by the hand. 'I'll be grateful to you as long as I live if you do,' he said.

The large room of the Empress Club was filled to overflowing when Howarth arrived there about two o'clock on the following afternoon. It was a Thursday, the first day of the Sandown summer meeting, and the prospect of big fields and good prices had attracted an unusual number of sporting men. Crowds of backers surrounded the bookmakers, who were roaring out the odds in stentorian tones. Foster was one of the busiest, and Howarth had no opportunity of speaking to him till the result of the first race had arrived, when there was a temporary lull.

The 'boss,' as Dick was usually styled in the room, invited his friend to have a drink, and they went to the refreshment counter which was at one end of the room. Whilst they were imbibing, Dick whispered—'That's Denton at the third table from here. Do you see those two fellows talking together in the middle of the room, just opposite to him?'

'I see,' said Tom.

'Well, keep your eye on them. When they get a cert. one of those two will come to me to back it. That's about all I can tell you. Now I must go. By the way,' he added, as they turned away from the counter, 'you had better back something with me now and again; it don't matter what, for, of course, the bets won't count. If Denton and his lot were to see a stranger here who was not betting, they might smell a rat and be on their guard. There's a *Sportsman* for you:' and Dick returned to his table.

Left to himself Tom began his career of amateur detective. The room was so full that he found little difficulty in observing every movement of Denton and his co-conspirators without attracting attention. He watched patiently for a couple of hours, and was at length rewarded by discovering something of significance. Just about the time fixed for each race to be run he noticed that one or other of the two men pointed out to him by Foster was invariably to be found under a certain window.

There were only two at that side of the room—presumably the back of the club premises; but on the opposite side there were six, and under these the bookmakers' tables were placed. Continuing his watch, Tom found out that the individual occupying this position only held it till the bell rung for the result of the race; then he rejoined his companions. Only at the very last race was there any alteration in this programme. Then the man at the window left his place before the result came, and made his way to Foster's table. Tom followed, and heard him back two horses, the prices being 100 to 6 and 100 to 7.

In another moment the name of the winner was announced—it was the 100 to 7 chance!

'Now,' said Tom, confidentially to himself, 'I begin to see daylight; the news comes through that window.'

There was now a general exodus from the club, and he had an opportunity of examining the window carefully. It was quite as opaque as the others, and to see anything through it

was an impossibility. 'Must be signalled by sound,' thought Tom, 'but what sound?' His ears as well as his eyes had been on the alert all day, but beyond a confused noise of hammering on wood, as of a joiner at work, he had heard nothing. 'Well,' he muttered, 'it will go hard if I don't tumble to something to-morrow.'

Foster had made up his book, and was waiting for him, and they at once left the club. As soon as they were in the street Dick asked—'Well, found out anything?'

'Nothing particular, yet. Have they been at you to-day?'

'Yes; confound them! Had me for a hundred over the last race.'

Howarth made no comment upon this information—he knew all about it. Presently he asked—'What's at the back of the club, Dick?'

'Oh, a small coopering place. Why do you ask?'

'Do you know the owner of it?' asked Tom, ignoring the question.

'Know him?—yes; he's my tenant.'

'Is he at all the sort of man who would be likely to throw in with these fellows who are robbing you?'

Dick pondered for a moment. 'Well, no;,' he said. 'I should think not. Seems a decent enough sort of chap. You've got something in your head, Tom,' he added; 'what is it?'

'I'd rather not say just now. I may have something definite for you to-morrow.'

'All right, old chap; don't hurry yourself.' Soon afterwards they parted.

Howarth was at the club in good time next day, and took his place on the bench near the window through which he suspected the secret intelligence came. He had provided himself with a sporting paper, which he perused with an appearance of profound interest. Greatly to his surprise the time for the first race passed without any one coming near him, but just as the bell rang for the result he observed one of Denton's men moving away from the *other* back window.

Evidently either would serve their turn.

At first Tom was inclined to fear that his motions might have been observed, but a little reflection convinced him that this could not have been the case, his watch had been so unobtrusive; the change of venue merely went to show that either window would serve the purpose. 'All the better,' thought

Tom ; 'whatever the signal may be, I can hear it without going too close to the fellows.'

The next race went by without anything noteworthy having occurred. Tom listened with all his ears, but could hear nothing beyond a desultory hammering at barrels, or something of that kind—nothing at all special. The watcher at the other window had kept his post till the race was over. Obviously nothing had come for either race.

The succeeding event was the principal one of the day, and a large field was expected. 'Now or never,' said Tom to himself. He kept his eyes fixed upon his paper, but his ears were stretched to catch the slightest sound. The numbers of the runners were put up, and betting was going on fast and furious. Presently a louder noise than usual was heard from the back, as if several hammers were going all at once. This ceased, and was followed by resounding single strokes. Mechanically Tom found himself counting them—one—two—three, and then silence. He glanced towards the other window ; the man posted there had risen, and was making his way to Foster's table. 'That's it !' exclaimed Tom, 'three is the number of the winner ! Can it be three on the programme ?' He looked at his paper, the third horse on the list of the race was named Sultan—was it possible the thing could be so simple as this ? He was not left long in suspense. In little more than a minute the result had arrived, and the winner's name resounded through the room—it was Sultan.

'This is a very good game,' mused Tom ; 'I think I shall take a hand.'

He strolled round for a little, had a drink at the bar, and got back to his place as the numbers were put up for the next race.

Again the signal came—this time number five. Tom went over to Denton's table, and backed the horse to win a hundred. He had been admitted to the membership of the club the previous day. Again the signal proved correct.

Nothing was done on the remaining two races.

Foster was overjoyed on hearing of the discovery, and chuckled with delight at Denton being caught in his own trap. But he was full of wrath against the cooper. 'D——n him !' he growled, 'I'll give the beggar notice to quit to-morrow.'

'You'll do nothing of the sort,' said Tom ; 'just leave everything in my hands for the present.'

A long conversation then ensued, in the course of which Tom proposed a plan for the discomfiture of Denton, the result of which will appear in due course.

The next day, the last of the Sandown meeting, the valuable Imperial Stakes were to be run for. About one o'clock Tom Howarth found himself in a narrow lane which ran at the back of the Empress Club, and presently stopped before a gateway, over which was a sign bearing the words—'Jackman, Cooper, &c.' He passed through and looked around him. A heterogeneous collection of barrels, casks, and tubs lay all about, but no sign of workmen; they had probably knocked off for the day.

'Hallo!' he shouted.

The hail brought forth a man from a small wooden erection in a corner of the yard. He was a middle-aged individual, in shirt-sleeves and apron.

'I want to see Mr. Jackman,' said Tom.

'That's me,' was the rather ungrammatical reply.

Tom took a good look at him. A dull fellow enough, he seemed, considerably more like a flat than a sharp.

'There's something wrong with your telephone,' said Tom. 'I must have a look at it.'

The existence of a telephone in the place was pure conjecture on Howarth's part, but it turned out right.

'All right,' said the cooper in the most lamblike fashion, and he moved aside from the doorway in which he had been standing. Tom went in, and a single glance round the place, which was roughly fitted up as an office, showed him the telephone. He wasted no more time in beating about the bush.

'I'm afraid, Mr. Jackman,' he said, 'that you have got yourself into serious trouble.' An alarmed look instantly appeared upon the man's face.

'Trouble,' he repeated; 'what for?'

'You've been using this telephone for the purpose of swindling Mr. Foster at the club—that's a serious matter, you know.'

He turned ghastly pale. 'Nay, Mister,' he protested, 'I have nowt to do wi' the telephone.'

'And who sounds the number on an empty cask—eh?'

'Well, I only do as they bid me,' was the reply.

'And don't you get a share of the pickings?'

'Pickings; no! They nobbut pay me a pound a week.'

'Now,' said Tom, impressively, 'it's no use your pretending innocence. Through your assistance these men have robbed Mr. Foster of hundreds of pounds, and you mean to say you only get a pound a week.'

'Not a ha'penny more, I'll swear — and,' the cooper went on, eagerly, 'if that's what they were doing I knew nowt about it. They told me it was to keep Mr. Denton from betting over much against the winner.'

Tom pondered for a moment. It was just possible the man was speaking the truth.

'Well, if that's the case,' he said, 'we might let you off—but on one condition only. You must be under my orders to-day, and if you play me false, even by a look, I'll hand you over to the police the next minute.'

The threat was quite sufficient.

'I'm sure, Sir,' he said, 'I'll do every mortal thing you tell me.'

'Very well then. I suppose some of these fellows will soon be here?'

'There's nobbut one. He mostly comes about two o'clock.'

Tom looked around for some place where he could watch everything without being seen himself. A few planks were resting against the wall near the office, and with the cooper's assistance he arranged them so as to form a capital hiding-place, leaving sufficient crevices to peep through.

'Now,' he said, 'you must find some work in the middle of the yard—I can't afford to lose sight of you. And, remember, whatever number you are told to knock you can do so unless you see my handkerchief at this hole. But if you see it you will knock one more—do you understand?'

'Right, Sir ; I know what to do.'

'All right, then ; cover me up.'

Tom crept behind the planks, and a couple of loose ones placed over where he had entered effectually hid him from view. He had not long to wait before the arrival of the telephone man, who exchanged a casual word or two with the cooper, and went into the office.

The Imperial Stakes came third upon the programme of the day, and it was upon that event that Tom meditated his *coup*. If any early news came for either of the first two races, it was not his intention to interfere. As it happened none did come ; the fields being very small perhaps accounted for it. As the time for the big race drew near, Tom's anxiety reached fever

pitch. Had he been 'standing in' with Denton's gang he could not have prayed more fervently for an early message. If none came, the turning of the tables which he had in view would fail to come off. How he longed to hear some sound from the individual in the office!

Three o'clock. Five minutes past—six—seven. Hurrah! he has come to the door. 'Five!' he called to the cooper. Instantly Tom's handkerchief appeared through the planks. The cooper with a hammer in each hand performed a violent fantasia for about half a minute on the end of a big empty barrel; then came the single strokes—one—two—three—four—five—*six*!

Denton's man came running out. 'What the blankety—blank—blank are you about?' he roared. 'I said five.'

The cooper looked stupefied. 'So you did,' he stammered. 'I don't know whatever I was thinking about.'

'By ——! you've done it now! Won't Denton be in a flaming rage—oh, Lord! And it can't be mended; they'll have the result in a minute. Well, I must go round and see him after the race; I'm not going to take the blame.' So saying he marched out of the yard.

When Tom Howarth could speak for laughing, he called to the cooper to let him out.

'You've done capitally,' he said; 'now lock up the place, and get off home. Of course they'll smell a rat at once, but in any case they must not get in here again to-day.'

Jackman put on his coat and departed; Tom seeing him well on his homeward way before he turned his steps towards the Empress Club.

The result of the Imperial Stakes had just arrived at that establishment, and a very pretty commotion was caused by it. A few minutes previously one of Denton's commissioners had come up to Foster, and asked the price of the favourite—Lightfoot.

'Three to one,' said Dick.

'Can I have three ponies?'

'Yes; three fifties if you like.'

'All right; I'll take 'em.' The man was moving away when Dick said—'Would you like any more? I don't fancy this favourite much.'

'I'll double the bet, if you like.'

'Very good; that'll make three hundred to one.'

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The backer moved away to Denton's table, and a whisper passed between him and his employer.

Just then a prosperous hotel-keeper, a great friend of Foster's and rather a plunger in his way, accosted Denton with the query—'What price Irene?'

The bookmaker smiled. 'Now that's one I haven't written; I'll lay you twenty to one.'

'How much to?'

'O—h, anything in reason.'

'You daren't lay a thousand to fifty?'

'Oh, daren't I, by Jove? Yes I will, then; it hasn't a hundred to one chance.'

'So you think; well, put it down.'

It was by no means Denton's habit to bet to so much money, but his agent had just whispered him that the favourite had won, and he chuckled with glee at the thought that he had 'found' fifty. His mirth, poor fellow, was of short duration. In a moment the result of the race had come, and the name of Irene was loudly proclaimed as the winner. Denton turned livid, and his friends were dumbfounded. 'What the devil does it mean?' he asked in a thick whisper of the man who had backed the favourite for him. He was lost in astonishment, and could give no explanation. Dick Foster's countenance wore a look of supreme satisfaction, and his friend, the hotel-keeper, fairly danced about the room in the exuberance of his delight.

The doors of the club were always opened for a short time after each race, and presently the man who had been in charge of the telephone came in and told Denton of the cooper's mistake.

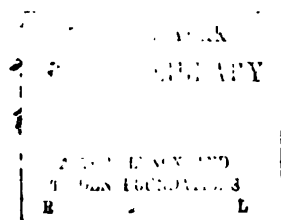
'Mistake be blowed,' he growled, 'nothing of the sort. He's been put up to it—we've been had, my boys.'

When the intelligent reader is informed that the favourite's name was number six on the programme, and the winner's number five, he will see that the bookmaker's conclusion was about correct. If any doubt remained it was dissipated when Dick Foster strolled up to him and in a tone of intense meaning said—'Want to buy a telephone, Denton?' I can let you have one cheap; party's retiring from business.'

There was nothing for Denton to do but grin and bear it. It is true he had lost eleven hundred pounds, a large sum for him, that day, but he had had many successful nibbles at



Finch Mason *... I knew it! I was sure of it!*



Foster's pockets before being found out. He 'weighed in' on settling day like a man.

Dick Foster swears there never was and never will be a detective half as clever as his friend, Tom Howarth.

A LUCKY MOUNT.

By FINCH MASON.

IT is 'hard lines' on a young man who has passed the first twenty odd years of his life in the lap of luxury to suddenly wake up one fine morning and find himself—through circumstances over which he has no control—a beggar. And that is precisely what happened, a short time before our tale opens, to our friend Frank Holyoake—we beg his pardon, the Reverend Frank Holyoake, we should have said—until lately the curate, with an annual stipend of a hundred pounds, of the parish of Twaddlebury, but now, thanks to a great piece of good luck that befel him, particulars of which we are going to relate, holder of the valuable living of Cheeryfield, so delightfully situated in the very heart of that locality, so well known to sojourners in the county of Upsy-downshire, hunting men in particular, by the name of the Vale of Meadowsweet.

The only son of a rich London banker, adored by his mother and spoilt by his father, it is not to be wondered at that young Holyoake's early life was about as pleasant a one as could well be imagined. Everything, first of all when a boy, and subsequently when arrived at man's estate, was his that heart could desire and money procure. At Eton, where he quickly earned for himself the *sobriquet* of 'Swell' Holyoake, owing to the extravagant way in which his room was furnished, the large amount of pocket-money he always possessed, and the lavish way he had of entertaining his friends; and afterwards at Christ Church, where he kept the drag, hunted assiduously, and entertained more royally than ever, he was one of the most popular men of his time. In saying this, don't let it be supposed that we mean to insinuate that the reason for his universal popularity was that his pockets were better lined than those of his neighbours, for it was not so. It was simply and solely because he

was such a thoroughly 'good fellow' in every sense of the word, that he was a general favourite with high and low. Money makes the Man, as the saying is, and so it does to a certain extent ; that is to say, it enables him to purchase things that he could not buy if he had it not ; but it won't buy him popularity. It will procure him plenty of 'toadies,' but no *friends*. No, our experience is, that a man, if he is a good fellow, is quite as popular without money as with it. At the same time, if he has plenty of the needful as well as amiability of character, why, so much the better ; and he who possesses this happy combination is, depend upon it, a person to be cultivated.

To return to our hero. Frank Holyoake, as we have previously mentioned, woke up one fine morning to find himself, not famous, but ruined—lock, stock, and barrel. It was the old story over again. Disastrous speculations on the part of the banker, his father, followed by still more desperate ventures in order to get round. Speculations conducted *sub rosa*, on his own account, by the manager. Appropriation of valuable securities, and flight to America of that gentleman with the proceeds. *Finale*, the bursting up of the whole concern, the ruin of divers country gentlemen, and the death of Mr. Holyoake, Sen., of a broken heart. Frank's mother fortunately was dead, and his two sisters, older than himself, were married, so that he, in a manner, was the only one of the family to be pitied. As it was, he might have been fairly well off had he chosen. But with a chivalry rather unusual now-a-days, he insisted, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his more matter-of-fact lawyer, in giving up the whole of his share of his mother's settlement, for the benefit of the creditors, only reserving a sufficient sum with which to pay his own debts. The sale of his horses and college furniture put him in the possession of a few hundreds and the only thing to be done now was to consider what was best for the future. Frank sat down to look his position in the face with a clear conscience at all events, and, after much deliberation on what profession he should take up, elected to choose between entering the Church and entering into the Army. We believe he eventually tossed up, heads for Sword, tails for Gown, and Gown won. In process of time he was duly ordained, and he was next heard of performing the not very arduous duties of curate in the parish of Twaddlebury, in Larkshire.

Now Twaddlebury was situated in the heart of a very fine

hunting county (there is not a better pack of hounds in England than the Larkshire), and poor Frank, who was well aware of the fact, rather hugged himself with the notion that possibly now and again he might get a stray mount out of one of his sporting parishioners. The Squire, too, whoever he was, no doubt on finding he was a gunner, would give him a day's shooting occasionally. Perhaps, too, his vicar was a sportsman. In a sporting county there is generally, reasoned he, a sporting parson or two knocking about. As it turned out, however, he was sadly out in his reckoning. The Rev. Samuel Dullmug the vicar, proved to be a pedantic, pompous old ass of the first water, anything but a sporting character, and completely under the thumb of the squire, Mr. Bumpus, a recent importation from Birmingham, a vulgar old party of an evangelical turn of mind, possessing a great deal of money and very few H's, who detested sport of any kind whatsoever, and entirely disapproved, as he quickly gave Frank to understand, of a clergyman participating in any such amusements. And, as his word was law in the parish, and especially so with the timeserving Mr. Dullmug, who literally bowed down and worshipped him and his wealth, and who, we verily believe, would have blacked Mr. Bumpus's boots if he had asked him, the sporting Frank did not look forward to a very lively time of it. It was as well he did not, for September and October passed away, and his Boss still remained in its case. November came, and the sight of the hounds trotting through the village one day was almost too much for the ill-used curate. What visions of Sturdy's Castle and Bradwell Grove in the old Oxford days did they not recall? It was too hard, thought he, as the last of the red-coats passed him, and he turned with a sigh into old Mother Maggison's cottage to see how she and her chronic bad leg were getting on. However, it was ordained that he was to have a ride with them before long, a ride, too, that he would remember to the day of his death. And this is how it came about.

Every village has its baker, and Twaddlebury was not behind hand in this respect. Its inhabitants were supplied with the staff of life by an individual of the name of Tuff, or Tom Tuff, as he was generally called. Now Tom, being a well-to-do man, had a better house than his neighbours, with a garden at the back, and a meadow behind that again. Having no family, his thrifty wife was in the habit of letting her first-floor; and it was an understood thing, when a new curate made his appearance in the

place, that he was to be domiciled during his stay at Mrs. Tuff's. Accordingly, Frank Holyoake, like his predecessors, took possession of the baker's first-floor on his arrival, and Mrs. Tuff, being a comfortable, homely sort of woman, with a fine natural turn for cooking, and the rooms themselves being of a cosy description, our friend very soon made himself very much at home.

Now the curates who had preceeded our hero as tenants of Mrs. Tuff's first-floor, had one and all been gentry of the high-waistcoated, slouch-hatted school, and Tom Tuff, who was of a cheerful disposition, fond of his glass, and with sporting tendencies of a high order, somehow or other, as he used to tell his old woman, as he called his wife, never 'cottoned' to 'em. But no sooner did Frank come upon the scene, with his neat, well-made black cutaway, and his white tie, folded in a knowing way that 'Ginger Stubbs' must have approved of, and his deerstalker felt hat set ever so little on one side, and no sooner did Mr. Tuff cast his eye over him than the latter worthy, as he said, 'took to his lodger at once.' 'Mark my words, old 'ooman,' said he the same evening to his wife, 'that genelman's one of the right sort, or I never see one yet; and it's a rum thing, but I feel sartain sure as I've seen him afore somewheres, and where it was, I can't call to mind, blow me if I can.'

'In church most likely,' suggested the dame.

'No, it warn't no church, missis,' said Tom, shaking his head decisively, 'it warn't no church. It was either out a-huntin' or else at the races as I've seen him.'

'Stuff, Thomas,' replied Mrs. Tuff; 'if the gentleman had been fond of such amusements he never would have come here, sure-lie. It was in church as you've seen him, depend on it.'

Tom, however, would not be convinced. 'No, no; it was either at the races or out a-huntin',' persisted he. Many a chat did he have, principally on sporting subjects, we regret to say, with his clerical tenant; but, for the life of him, he never could recollect where it was he had seen him, and at last gave it up as a bad job.

Now Mr. Tuff, when he wasn't driving about with his baker's cart, was in the habit of riding about the country on a remarkably good-looking, grey, four-year-old mare—one he had bred himself, indeed—which grey mare, having a will of her own, and a bit of a temper into the bargain, would very often get the better of her heavy-handed master, more particularly when he was what the Scotch call 'fou,' which was not seldom, on

which occasions, having without much difficulty got rid of the baker, she would indulge in a gallop on her own account, and arrive home, in process of time, by herself, to the infinite terror of Mrs. Tuff.

One Saturday afternoon, then, Frank Holyoake, out for a constitutional in the lanes by himself, hearing cries as of a fellow-creature in distress, on looking over a gate, was aware of his landlord in a highly inebriated condition, lying on his back in a large grass field, whilst, in the distance, was the grey mare enjoying a gallop all by herself. Vaulting lightly over the gate, he went to the baker's assistance, and, having ascertained that he was not hurt, persuaded that worthy to remain where he was whilst he went in pursuit of the mare. He at last succeeded in catching her, but not until she had jumped two fences, and was consequently two fields off. And then, as there was no one looking on, quoth he, 'Why, I may as well have a ride myself.' In a second he was in the saddle, and, setting her going, proceeded to ride her back, best pace, over the fences (which she jumped like a bird) to the spot where he had left her dissipated owner. That worthy, blinking and winking like an old owl, received him with much cordiality, the more so that it had just dawned upon him where it was he had seen the Curate before. 'I knowed it! I was sure of it! I was right and the old 'ooman was wrong,' hiccupped he, waving his old white hat, crushed into the shape of a concertina by his late fall, over his head in great excitement. 'I knowed darned well it warn't in church! *Norrabirrovit!* It was at Aylesbury Stipplechases, two year ago, *that's* where it was as I seed you—you was a-ridin' in pretty nigh every race both days, and I backed you each time you won, for they told me you was a good 'un to ride. Now, it was you; warn't it now?'

'I fear it was,' replied Frank with a sigh, 'only please don't say anything about it in the village. I shouldn't like the Vicar or Mr. Bumpus to know I used to ride steeplechases, you understand.'

'Well, I don't (hic) think it matters what sich rubbage as they think, Shir,' replied Mr. Tuff; 'but, as you wish it (hic), why mum's the (hiccup) by all meansh.'

'And, now, don't you think we'd better get into the road again?' said Frank.

Mr. Tuff thought they had; so, leading the mare between them, they got to the gate.

'Locked, by Jove!' ejaculated Frank.

'Sho it ish (hic),' said Mr. Tuff, wagging his head to and fro. 'Sho it ish. Nevermi', mare'll jump it like a bird. Put her at it, Mishter Holyoake, Shir, and she'll (hiccup) you over all ri', never fear.'

Frank said not a word, but once more jumped up on the mare. Taking her back a bit into the field, he sent her with a shout boldly at the gate, a stiff, white one. The mare evidently knew what she was wanted to do, for, pricking her ears and quickening her pace as she neared the obstacle, she flew it in perfect style.

'I gave her the office, and over it pop
Went the clipper that stands in the stall at the top,'

Sang Frank, as he landed handsomely in the road and pulled up, whilst the excited owner of the mare clambered over the gate, with some difficulty, and no little danger to himself.

'What did I tell you?' said he; 'ishn't she a beauty. I'll tell you what, Shir, I'll put her in the Grand Nateral (hic) Steeplechase, and you shall ride her, if you like.' Having made which magnanimous offer, Mr. Tuff once more, with Frank's assistance, mounted the mare and made for home, the curate accompanying him on foot, to see that he did not get into further mischief.

Needless to say that, after this adventure, Frank and Mr. Tuff fraternised more than ever, and the Sporting Baker, who was no fool, and quite alive to the fact that it would be the making of the mare if he could induce Frank to ride her pretty often, generously made that gentleman free of her whenever he pleased. And, as it was too good an offer to be declined, our friend *did* please pretty often. Mr. Tuff, indeed, now never offered to get on her back—averring that he had lost his nerve or confidence, as he called it—and the worthy man, whenever he found a few thorns in the mare's legs, which he not seldom did when the curate returned from one of his rides, would rub his hands with great glee as he chuckled to himself, 'You've been off the 'igh road, and over some o' them there 'edges and ditches, old gal, I know. A little more o' the parson's tutoring and you'll be worth three 'underd guineas—not a penny less.

Things went on in this way until they were well into December, and, as may be imagined, by this time Frank and the grey mare were on the very friendliest of terms with each

other. To use Mr. Tuff's words, 'the curate and his light hands had made her as 'andy as a lady's maid.'

She was a delightful hack, and had all the makings of a first-class hunter. 'I only wish I could give her a turn with the hounds,' sighed Frank.

'I fancy we could cut some of 'em down, and hang 'em up to dry between us before the day was out, eh, my beauty.' And the grey mare would arch her neck, and play with her bit, as much as to say: 'Only try me, that's all.'

Now, it chanced that, early one morning, Frank was called upon, before he had finished his breakfast, to go and see one of his elderly parishioners—old Jimmy Kiff, indeed, 'Who had been took,' the messenger said, 'very bad in the night, and was like to die.' Having paid his visit, and ascertained for himself that Jimmy's was a bad case, the curate determined to order out Mr. Tuff's grey mare at once, and trot off to the parish doctor, who lived some four miles off, to bid him come immediately, for Jimmy's case was urgent, and parish doctors, as Frank was well aware, are apt to be dilatory unless hustled. The grey was saddled and brought round by Mr. Tuff in person, immensely pleased with himself as usual. The fact was that every ride Frank had on the mare the sporting baker looked upon as equivalent to ten pounds added on her value.

'Now, be careful on her, Mr. Holyoake, Sir,' said Mr. Tuff, ironically, as Frank mounted. '*Don't* go 'oppin over any gates, or jumpin any o' them nasty 'edges and ditches, will you. Lor bless me,' continued the admiring Mr. T. to himself, as the two moved off, 'what an 'ossman that is, to be sure! What 'ands! what a seat! if I had my way I'd make him Archbishop o' Canterbury to-morrow.'

Frank in due time arrived at the doctor's, and, having delivered his message, prepared to return; but it was one of those delightfully soft mornings that one sometimes gets in December, and the balmy air fanned so delightfully the curate's face that he found himself debating whether he would go back just yet or no. He looked at his watch. Only eleven o'clock. 'Heavens!' exclaimed Frank; 'what a hunting morning it is. I'll be bound there's a scent, too. Well, old girl,' said he, after a moment's reflection, addressing the mare, 'I think we may as well make a bit of a round of it before we go home.'

* * * * *

What was it, as Frank and the mare went sauntering

slowly along a lane, about twenty minutes after they had left the doctor's behind them, that suddenly made the former pull up and listen attentively, and the latter to prick her ears and quiver all over, as if she, too, heard something that upset her ordinary equanimity? Could it be the twang of a horn, borne lightly on the breeze, that caused the curate's face to light up in such a remarkable manner?

'It is the horn,' exclaimed he, after listening again attentively; 'stand still, mare. There it is again, and I can hear hounds running too, and, by Jove, I do believe they're coming this way.'

And, now, what is it that attracts the curate's eyes as he scans the country to the left of him? What animal is that he sees, in the middle of the large grass field next the road, making the best of his way at a very useful pace to a point in the hedge, about fifty yards from where Frank sits like a statue? Can it be the fox?

'I *daren't* move now,' whispered Frank to himself, pale with excitement, 'and if I head him I shall never forgive myself as long as I live.' In another minute the fox made his appearance in the road; and—'Thank heaven!' ejaculated Frank, 'he has not seen me.'

Reynard was evidently in a hurry, for he crossed the road without looking to right or left, and it was the sight of him, well away across the next field, that now caused Frank's exclamation and gasp of relief; our sporting curate, be it noted, being one of those who looked upon the crime of heading a fox almost in the light of a capital offence.

The 'Yap, yow, yow' of the hounds in pursuit now got nearer and nearer. The mare breaking into a sweat, fairly trembled with excitement, and Frank, standing up in his stirrups, was aware of the whole pack, all together, so that a sheet might have covered them, in the next field but one. On they came at a pace that looked uncommonly like killing, and in another second the fence into the lane crackled with their united weight. A tall, heavy gentleman, somewhat past the prime of life, admirably mounted, and whom Frank rightly guessed was the Master, was close behind, and jumped the drop into the road, parallel with his huntsman, in most workmanlike style. Thundering in the rear, like a charge of cavalry, came the leading men of the hunt, one or two ladies among them, all as eager as hawks, and behind them again, in straggling order, extending over a large

distance of ground, rode the milder performers ; the crancers, the funkens, small boys on ponies, &c., usually forming the rear guard in a run with hounds.

'Hang it all !' exclaimed Frank, as the Master and his huntsmen went in and out of the road like a flash of lightning ; 'flesh and blood can't stand this. I may never get such another chance for goodness knows how long. Bother old Dullmug and Bumpus too. Here goes !' and, without more ado, Frank turned the mare, now half mad with excitement, short at the fence, and in another second was sailing away, hands down, with literally only two men between him and the hounds. 'What a place I've got !' thought he.

The business of the hunt now drew level, and our curate had to do all he knew, for jealousy was evidently the order of the day. How they stared, too, at the black-coated, black-trousered parson, as, riding quietly and well, he kept his place in spite of them.

'Who the devil is he ?' shouted Captain Coper to his neighbour, Tom Lovel.

'Don't know,' was the reply ; 'good 'un to go whoever he is. If he preaches as well as he rides, he'll do ; eh ?'

The country was nearly all grass that they were running over, and the pace was simply awful, the consequence was that before long, men began to look out for their second horses. A slight check gave them two or three minutes' breathing time, and then, hitting it off once more, they went away harder than ever. The country was very soon dotted about with sportsmen in different stages of distress, for, owing to the fox having taken a different line to that confidently expected (when they found, at Rattleton Wood, the foxes always headed for the Forest, whereas this customer—a stranger probably—took quite another line, and headed boldly for the Vale), the second horsemen had gone wrong, and not turned up.

'Shall I get to the end of it, I wonder ?' exclaimed our curate, as he and the grey got up after performing a very perfect somersault over some rails in a corner.

The mare had evidently had nearly enough of it, and Frank was just thinking of pulling up, when the sight of the huntsman suddenly taking his cap off put new life into him. The fox was dead-beat, slowly creeping up the hill of the very next field. A shepherd saw him, so did his dog ; the former shouted as if he was being murdered, the latter flew at poor Reynard, and

turned him. The next moment Trimbrush and Traveller, racing clean away from the body of the pack, had him down by the haunches. Frank, digging his spurless heels into the grey, hustled her somehow or another through the intervening fence, and in another minute he had the pleasure of finding himself standing by the baying pack, the only man up with the exception of the huntsman, who had left his horse in the middle of the last field, and done the rest on foot, and the Master, who, done to a turn, put in an appearance at a feeble trot.

'Who-hoop!' shouted the latter, pulling out his watch.

'Who-hoop!' echoed Frank.

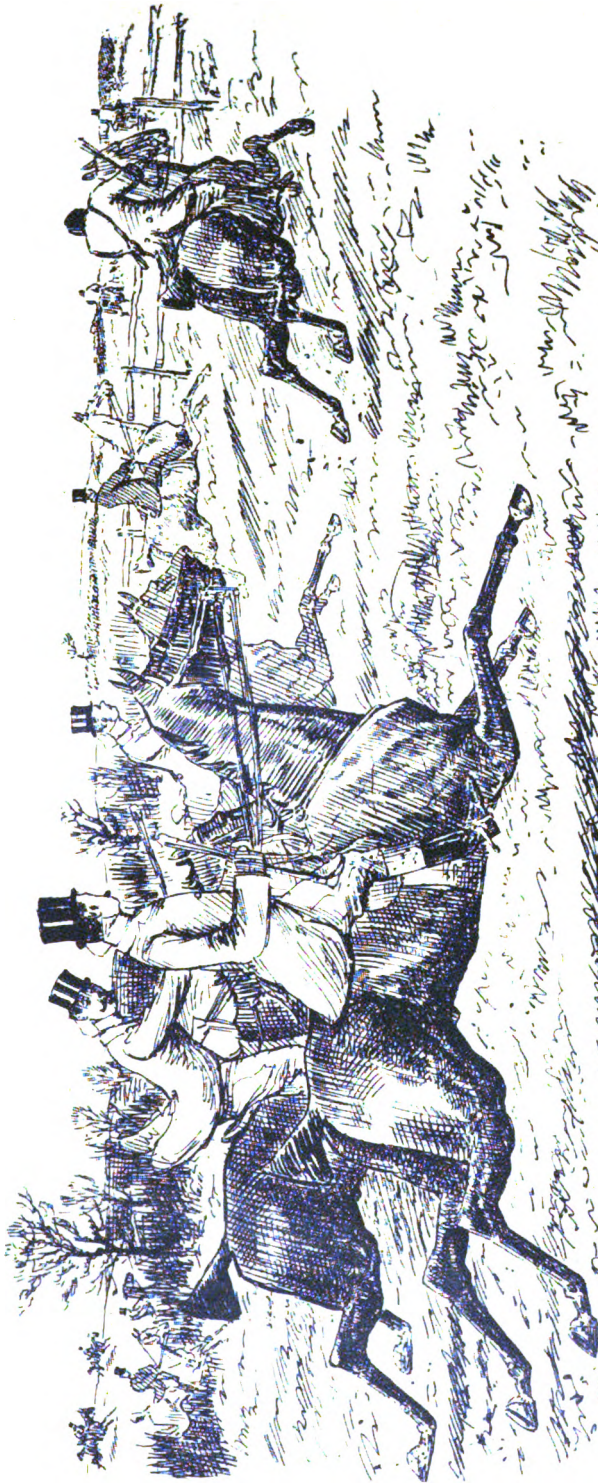
'The best thing we've had this season,' said the Master, all smiles, addressing Frank; 'fifty-one minutes, with only one check, and best pace all the way. I congratulate you, Sir, on getting to the end of it,' added he, courteously, and, as he saw the huntsman now approaching with that proud trophy in his hand, 'you must allow me to present you with the brush. Right well you've earned it, too, let me add.'

And, as the blushing Frank put the trophy in his pocket, he vowed in his wicked heart that this was the happiest day he had ever spent in his life.

By this time the stragglers began to turn up, also the second horses, so the Master and his huntsman, getting on their remounts, the hounds moved off to draw Clapperclaw Wood, whither, needless to say, Frank did not accompany them; so, bidding the kindly Master farewell, he got once more into the high road and made for home, stopping *en route* at the first roadside inn he came to to get some gruel for the mare, and a glass of ale for himself. Not before they were wanted, as the attendant ostler thought as he watched the avidity with which both refreshments were sucked down.

* * * * *

In the course of the run Frank, jumping hastily into the Bibury road, passed (he recollected it afterwards) right under the noses of the horses of a barouche which was drawn up thereon, the occupants of which were standing up looking on at the fun. If he had looked at the said occupants (which he didn't) he would have been aware that they were none other than the brand new Brummagem squire, Mr. Bumpus, J.P., accompanied by Mrs. B., and the Rev. Dullmug and his sour-faced consort. Had he seen them the chances are he wouldn't have enjoyed the rest of the run quite so much as he did. However,



Who the devil is he?

Frank McKenna

1. A
2. COPY
3. SP
4. L

they saw *him*, and that was sufficient. Never were four people so scandalised in this world.

'The Rev. Mr. 'Olyoake, '*unting!*' with his 'at and his 'oss covered with mud,' exclaimed old Bumpus. 'This 'ere won't do, Dullmug, at no price.'

'Indeed it will not, my dear Sir,' replied the obsequious Dullmug; 'I will see to it the moment I return home, you may depend. A more unclerical, I may add *disgraceful* sight I never saw; and one that must not occur again, Sir, at least, not in *my* parish.'

* * * * *

A fortnight has elapsed since the event just recorded took place, and the scene is Tinkleton Station. On the platform, waiting for the up express, might have been seen the Rev. Frank Holyoake, looking decidedly down in the mouth. The pile of luggage on the truck close by, marked 'F. H.,' in white letters, and labelled London, denotes that the curate is on the wing. Indeed, he has left Twaddlebury, for good, he having been unable to keep his temper under the pressure brought to bear upon it by the united efforts of Mr. Bumpus and the Rev. Dullmug.

He is now journeying up to town with the intention of seeking something fresh. Having been driven to the station in Mr. Tuff's cart, that gentleman, overcome by his feelings and much whiskey and water, is in tears. To say the truth, Mr. T., having sold the grey mare for two hundred to Frank's friend, the M. F. H., the day after the run in which she carried the curate so well, has been more or less in a maudlin state ever since.

The bell rings, the train glides in, and Frank, with difficulty tearing himself away from the disconsolate Mr. Thomas Tuff, is hustled by the guard into a first-class smoking carriage, where his wraps, &c., have already been placed, just as the signal is given to move.

'Ha, ha!' sings out a cheery voice from the far corner of the carriage, almost before he has time to look round. 'What! my black-coated young friend of the good grey mare. How d'ye do once more?'

One glance at the speaker is sufficient. It is none other than Frank's acquaintance of a fortnight back, the Master of the Larkshire. Cigars are quickly under weigh, and in half-an-hour's time the murder is out, and Frank has told the much interested M. F. H. all about it.

When they parted at the London terminus, Frank found himself under an engagement to dine with his new friend that night at his hotel. And, better than that, before he parted from his host that night he had pledged himself to accept the valuable living of Cheeryfield, recently vacant, and in the gift of the M. F. H. 'You'll find a different sort of squire there to old Bumpus,' said his jolly host at parting, as he shook Frank warmly by the hand. And, as for hunting, go six days a week if it pleases you. Lor' bless you, they'll like you all the better for it.'

No wonder that Frank is fond of telling his friends that that run with the Larkshire on the Baker's grey mare was the best day's hunting he ever had in his life. We are with him entirely.

KENNEL REMINISCENCES.

By 'A RALLYWOOD.'



YOU remember the little gorse by Croxton Banks? Well, it doesn't hold many foxes, but what it does hold are mostly good ones, and as a fox-hound I ought to know, and I always fancy they must be closely related to the Saltby Heath race, for they are as different as possible from the foxes around the castle. These latter, as you know, seldom give much trouble when once you get them in the open. They never get rattled out enough in the cub-hunting season, and so become ringers; but the Croxton foxes are quite different. I remember one season when we had a month's frost, and the fixture was as usual placed at 'Belvoir, first day after the frost.'

Now, a good many men either stay away from these meets, or only put in an appearance to see how the ground is, and trot home early. They have two reasons for it; in the first place, there is often a nasty bit of hard ground lingering just where it ought not to be, and so a valuable hunter is lost, or, worse still, his rider is disabled for weeks: and secondly, the sport is seldom of the best, but on the day I mention commenced the career of the 'Croxton fox,' which went far to redeem the name of the Belvoir fixtures during the remainder of that season, and nearly through the next. The runs he furnished are matters of history. If he were forced to break towards the woodlands he

disdained their shelter, and gave us the Vale, but he mostly pointed towards the 'Three Queens,' which bears out my opinion as to his breed. You may be sure he didn't live so long before our pack without being gifted with more than ordinary cunning, and that is a good deal to say when talking of a fox. They often talked about the matter, for we lost scent continually in a manner that would lead any one to think it was 'catching,' but in time Jem and Will had agreed to discard this theory, for, if we got an afternoon fox, the scent so frequently improved that they could only come to the conclusion that it was the change of foxes that caused it, and not any alteration in the atmosphere.

Jem set his brains to work to puzzle the thing out, and one morning he remarked to Will, 'I've noticed every time we've lost that varmint there's bin "ship" about, and another thing, he generally takes a line over some light plough-land if he can, and over the grass, what there is of it, in the Vale. My belief is the beggar knows where to find "ship" to foil the scent.'

'That may be,' replied Will; 'but I don't believe the casts would fail so often. Other foxes run through sheep, either purposely or by accident, and the casts give us a line again as often as not.'

The end, however, came at last, and Reynard fell a victim to his favourite stratagem. We had come to the usual check on Ashbourne's farm, and Will could not hit it off, when a yokel in a smock gave a view holloa on the Grantham road. Will had grown very chary of responding to such indications, for, as you all know, the man has mostly seen a sheep-dog, but he caught at this like a drowning man at a straw, and killed the veteran after a rasping run between Salthy and Stonesby.

When we passed that way again, Goodall saw the man who gave the 'view,' and, handing him a half-a-crown, asked him whether he had seen the fox pass through sheep before. 'Yees,' replied the man, with a grin; 'me and my mate has seen him at his game two or three times. He allus goos through 'em where there ain't much chance to scatter, and when he's clear he drives the whole lot back over his line as well as my old Rover here could do it. Then he goos on again, and the ship come back arter him, and so by the time yo've done castin' he's got too fur for yo to make owt out on it. I thought yo'd gi' me summat,' he added, fondly feeling the half-crown in his pocket, 'or else I wouldn't a towed yo.'

Will determined after that to make a longer cast forward, but when he mentioned it to Jem, the latter said, 'That's all very well ; but suppose he took sharp to the left or right, it would be just as bad, except hounds happen to take up the cross line, and that's not so likely when they've just gone through "ship."'

'No,' added Jem with a hearty laugh ; 'I reckon that was a 'cute dodge, and he wasn't killed as I like to see a fox like him killed after all. I grudged that shepherd his tip, and I don't remember grudging a man a shilling before.'

'Well,' said Goodall, 'perhaps you're right, Jem, but what could I do? I went for my fox, of course, but we shan't want help of that sort again I expect. There aren't many varmints take lessons from sheep dogs, I hope. More than once I saw sheep scurrying in front, and should have nailed him, but they didn't scamper in the fashion they mostly do when Reynard is about. They usually run slanting to left or right, and pull up in about sixty yards when they find he is going on about his business.'

Talking about John Ashbourne reminds me of a snub he once gave to a young man who used to ride like a second horseman. I believe he used to take their lead, and then, when Will wanted to trot home, he would beg for another fox if there were three-quarters of an hour of daylight left.

We had killed a good fox from Coston covert after a fast run over the Buckminster estate, lost another that got up in a little plantation and took us nearly to the Bullimore, and brought another back to Knipton Pastures, and I know there wasn't a man, horse, or hound that had kept the line but was dead-beat when Will broke up number three. John, who was no light weight, had been with hounds up to the last half-mile, and came up directly after Mr. Timms, who was bemoaning at Will's refusal to draw again. John's mare was of course ridden almost to a standstill, so, turning to Mr. Timms, he said, 'I'll tell you what it is, sir, you might save a lot of money, and hunt all the same. Mr. Stanley's second horseman has come a cropper that will keep him off the pigskin for the rest of the season, and I'll warrant Goodall will give you a downright good recommendation for the place, won't you, Will?'

'Ay, take my word for it,' cried Will, with one of his hearty roars, 'for I don't like to see a scarlet coat bobbing about a mile off the line, and almost heading the fox into the pack when the

poor beggar's rag is three parts out of his mouth. We like keen 'uns in our country, but let 'em *be* keen 'uns, and (turning to the victim) I don't call *you* one, Mr. Timms, by a long chalk.'

Mr. T. sheered off, muttering something that sounded like 'Demned impertinent clod,' for which John cared as much as his pumped-out mare did.

'Paddy' was out with us that day, and, as usual, well-placed. 'By the piper,' he called after the discomfited one, 'ye'll be hailing from Thrinity College, for I never saw the man that knew bether the difference between two sides of a thriangle and the third.'

Neither Goodall nor Jem, by-the-bye, ever called Mr. Maher 'Paddy' behind his back. He was more of a Quorn man, but always preferred Waltham or Stonesby to Widmerpool or Wymeswold, and, day in day out, Jem always said, 'None of 'em goes better.' He rode good cattle, too, after his first season, when he brought some 'stone-wallers' that didn't suit the country, for they couldn't 'top' our ox-rails and pleached hedges, and hadn't the make or bottom to swing them; but he soon found that out, and whether he rode with as much judgment as our best men or not, he took as much stopping as any man at timber or water, but he had some narrow shaves at times through going *too* straight. Once, when we were going fast across the Waltham Glebe, he came to a fence, on the other side of which a lot of drain-pipes were stacked just where he was 'having it.'

'Look out, Mr. Maher; 'ware pipes!' cried Sedgebrook, veering slightly to the left to avoid them.

'Pipes be d——d,' bellowed Maher, 'I'm the bhoy to play on them.'

Play on them he did, but he didn't ride the same horse for weeks, and how he got out of it with hardly a bruise worth counting was a mystery. The men said an Englishman would have got off cheaply if he had been reduced to wheels for a month, but Maher said he didn't see the use of measuring a fence before you 'had it' instead of 'after,' when you could do it more 'convaniently' at your leisure. With all his rashness he only came to grief once to any serious extent. The pack went across Mr. Cleathing's lawn, and then over the churchyard. Of course, anybody else would have gone round, but not our Irish friend. Oh, no; he put his mount, Blarney, at the sunk

fence between the carriage-drive and the churchyard, which fence, you know, is just what Maher had been used to in his own country; but the gravestones were too thick for him, and he hadn't got half through before Blarney's leg was broken, and his own collar bone and three ribs in like condition. Blarney was shot where he lay, and found a grave at the back of the Old Club. On the wall they hung his hoof, and whenever 'Paddy' spoke of that day he expressed more regret for the loss of his favourite than for his own tedious confinement. Parson Cleathing was somewhat indignant at the sacrilege, but Paddy declared he ought to think him 'moighty' considerate that he didn't ask for a 'dacent' funeral. Though he couldn't for his life deny himself his joke, no man was more ready to pay up when the church in that same village wanted restoring, which Jem declared shewed him a gentleman as well as a sportsman. The only fault I ever heard them find with him was his propensity for skylarking. Goodall hated it, for he loved a good horse as well as a good hound, and said truly many a one was ruined at a fence, when the 'nonsense' was going on, that would have landed all right if hounds had been running, and the extra ounce of 'go' had been in him that the music is sure to supply.

We must, however, have all sorts in a hunt; they can't all be Sedgbrooks or Ashbournes, and even Will was fain to confess that, take him for all in all, there were worse men who rode with the Belvoir. From what I heard he could pound most of the Quorn as well. Dangerous told me that they once ran a little way into our country, and then veered to the right, past the ancient church and manor farm at Brentingby, and the river had to be faced, but it was too wide for all the rest. They went to the bridge, but Maher said his horse was a good water-jumper, and if he didn't clear it he would at any rate have a chance of showing what sort of a swimmer he was. As it turned out he had no chance of either, for he was well-nigh stuck fast in the mud formed by the treading in of the banks by Garton's bullocks during the summer. Fortunately they don't often have to clear the Eye, for if they fenced the bullocks off the banks they would have the rails as well as the water, so they would be no better off. They talk of jumping the Eye below Saxby bridge, but Jem declares it has only been done three times fairly, and one—Dick Floar—came back horse and all into the water, which Jem says was right enough for Dick, as he had had too much

‘jumping powder’ at Dalby Hall before he tried it, and a little water would do him no harm.

* * * * *

You remember my telling you of my first experience of the true scent when I was going to settle the bantam. That, of course, must ever stand alone, as Jem says, like ‘love’s young dream.’ Many of you know how much it surpasses all that follows, and the others *will* know, but the same remark doesn’t apply to the experience of a certain Wednesday morning. I had noticed unusual trouble was taken over the preparations, and extra care in the selection of the hounds for that day’s hunting. Though I kept my ears open I could make nothing out. The meet was at the Park, but Will took us a long trot to Scalford Gorse before drawing. Considering the places he passed on the way, this made me wonder more than ever what was on the board. Had they marked the ‘Traveller’ into the Gorse over night, or had the freehold farmers about there complained of the depredations of some thief more audacious than usual? I didn’t think they wanted to give the ‘Traveller’ another gallop so soon after the treat he gave us through the Vale, for it would have been simply murder, and as for the other idea, they never had many foxes at Scalford, so I was puzzling my brain over the matter as a halt was called outside the Gorse, when a young ‘Mounseer’ flicked me in the flank, and remarked that I was a likely-looking hound.

‘Ought to be, if breed goes for anything,’ replied Will. ‘He’s a Rallywood.’

The ‘Mounseer’ looked at me with great respect after that, and seemed to think he had been guilty of an impertinence in flicking me. ‘I don’t think I would throw that hound into covert to-day,’ he remarked to Will. ‘You might lose him, for he’s mostly in the front, I suppose.’

‘Pretty well forrard,’ replied Will, ‘but there are one or two faster. Sampson’s nose is his great recommendation; he has hardly rioted once since he has entered, has he Jem?’

‘No,’ said Jem, ‘and that makes me think he won’t own to this outlandish varmint. I don’t like the notion of hunting him at all. I would shoot the beggar.’

‘Wait till you see how he goes if we find him, and then I think you will alter your opinion,’ remarked the ‘Mounseer,’ for whom both Will and Jem seemed to have as much respect as they had for most men in the field. I had heard Will say

the only thing wrong about him was his name, and for that matter the Duke himself was a 'Mounseer' if you went far enough back.

I was thrown in with the rest, however, and soon got scent, but, not wishing to spoil my character, I put a strong restraint on myself, and refrained from 'opening,' though my body was quivering with excitement, for there was something I couldn't make out about it. There was no polecat business, and no possibility of doing anything but follow it up, but I didn't utter a note until one or two of the others had proclaimed in no uncertain tone that they too had it, when I could keep still no longer and joined in, whereupon there was a crash of music, and out we streamed on nearly the line of the 'Traveller.' You know this point at least from hearsay, and our line only bore to the right for the Cliff Wood instead of Sherbrook's Gorse.

The mention of this point will sufficiently indicate the length of the run, and throughout the whole of it I noticed my companions were bristling with excitement doubtless arising from the same peculiarity in the scent which had so strangely excited me in covert, and which continued unabated as we galloped over the heavy plough of the Vale and across Woolsthorpe Pasture up to the finish at the point I mentioned. We ran to view just past the Peacock, but such a fox was never seen by a Belvoir hound before. We had grey ones occasionally, but not so grey as this one, and as for size, he looked like three foxes rolled into one!

I don't suppose I was alone in debating the question as to how things would go at the finish, for of all the bloodthirsty brutes you ever dreamed of, when you had been helping yourself to a 'blow out' of lights, that was the worst. He didn't cover his ground like any other fox either. Instead of sailing smoothly along he went with a clumsy gallop, apparently getting along very slowly; but that was not so, as you can conceive when I tell you that we—the Belvoir—coursed him, yes, *actually coursed* him for two miles till he could stand it no longer, and we ran into him under the beech trees on the side of the carriage drive to the Grantham road. There was a row then, and some of us were in it. Careless and Tatton never ran again, and some of the other hounds got something to remember the 'Scalford Gorse fox' by. I came out with nothing worth mentioning, but when a veterinary surgeon, after examining Tatton, declared he was 'as good as a dead un' Will and Jem

didn't stop to choose their words about that same 'outlandish varmint' as Jem called it; 'Mounseer' and Will called it a wolf, and they know more than dear old Jem, so I suppose that was the name of the animal we ran from Scalford Gorse to Cliff Wood on the Wednesday in question.

What made them feel so wild about Tatton was this: they had taken a lot of trouble to get the strain, for he came of a race that were magnificently 'ribbed up' almost to a hound, and that was the first season they had had him at Belvoir. We found out afterwards that the animal we had all this trouble over was not bred in our country, but had escaped from a thing they carry foreign animals about in to show people what strange creatures live over the sea. 'Mounseer,' who had got up the hunt in question, did what he could to make amends for the loss of Tatton by securing a handsome dog puppy named Doncaster of the same breed. Leger there is his grandson, and, if he would only get out of covert faster, no unworthy grandson either.

That peculiar excitement I mentioned was often afterwards referred to when a couple of hounds had a quarrel. If one put his bristles up the other would very likely remark 'You don't fancy you're after the Scalford Gorse fox, do you?' The episode was of course a frequent subject of conversation, and one day Will remarked that when he was a whip a few hounds slipped away just as we did with the parson from the broom, and he had to go after them. Though he whipped them off the line before they ran either to ground or a kill, they were in view, 'and,' added Will, 'what do you think we were running?—Charley Poole's sheep-dog. I said nothing about it for the sake of two of my favourites who had taken part in the escapade, but the hounds on that little run behaved exactly the same as our pack did at Scalford.'

We had a gentleman hunting with us at that time who used to read a great deal about animals, and he told Will that ages ago, we hounds, the dogs, and the wolves were all one, but the wolves, though of the same blood, were the outcasts of canine society, living by rapine among steep rocks and dense forests, and that in the course of time the mode of life made them different in form and build from the dogs that lived in the open fields around the dwellings of men, and that a gradual antipathy was established and intensified till all remembrance of blood relationship was entirely lost. When

that stage was reached, said he, they were as eager to be at each others' throats as the tribes of human kind, when they happen to differ in complexion, manner of life, or on any other point, especially when they are neighbours.

This state of things being established there had meantime arisen another difference, viz., that between hounds and dogs, the former being exclusively addicted to hunting and waging warfare with the wolves of the mountains and forests, while the dogs attached themselves more closely to the husbandmen and shepherds, especially the latter, passing their days in peace, save when a wolf attacked the folds, and then they were more useful to give the alarm to their masters than to cope with the robber.

Thus the hounds conceived a contempt for the dogs as inveterate as their hatred to the wolves, and in time it became as natural for a pure-bred hound to grow furious at the intrusion of a dog as at the attack of a wolf, and the scent of either aroused this fury in an instant, causing the hound to manifest the same signs in either case, signs quite different from those produced by the scent of his ordinary game.

Whether this was all true or not I can't tell. Those were the wild old days before St. Hubert brought the chase into its present civilised form. All I can say is that the scents of the two undoubtedly resemble each other, only differing in degree, and the old inclination to chase these and other quarries besides our legitimate one—the fox, is still inherent in the best hounds and is only restrained by a course of careful training. I hope, however, the time will come when even a puppy will no longer 'riot,' though that won't be in our day.

'I should like a stag hunt,' observed an ambitious young hound at this point.

'You don't know what you are talking about,' I replied, Staghunting, as far as the countries Jem knows anything about are concerned, is a very poor business for everybody now-a-days, though he says he has read of staghunting in ancient times, and even later in other countries, that must be pretty sport. What you have to mind in the meantime, young Dashwood, is to take as little notice of deer stains as I would of a polecat, that is, if you don't want to taste the quality of Jem's thong. What would you think if you knew you were chivving a 'bagman' every time you heard 'eleu in to covert!' Well, that is staghunting exactly, and you don't taste blood

once a season. This I had from a big hound, Brawboy, that they drafted for his bad marking and sold to a 'stagger' somewhere south. Then he came back to the bench at Quorn, where they wanted to raise their standard of height, and he told one of the Trueman lot from whom I got it, and I believe it implicitly ; so comfort yourself with the reflection that you are entered in a pack that has no equal, and that in the wide world there is no career open to a hound of your build, or mine either for that matter, which gives the same chance of distinguishing yourself in the annals of the chase, and perhaps receiving funeral honours equal to those of my famous ancestor about whom it would scarcely become me, his eldest living representative, to say too much, but his record is there, and those who have not studied it can do so, for it has been handed down from generation to generation and tradition is reliable—*among hounds.*

'PUG' AND THE PATRIARCH.

By 'TOM MARKLAND.'

Canto I.



HERE was once a man named Noah who built a cumbrous boat,
Much bigger than the biggest launched from Birkenhead 'Great
Float.'

Whatever wood he made it from, is more than I can say,
Nor, while the deck was building, why the hull did not decay.
We've very good authority, he launched his monstrous ship,
The Deluge saved him trouble and expense about the 'slip,'
And every kind of animal, from mouse to polar bear,
Had notice served that through the flood, they'd find a shelter there.
The lordly lion didn't fail his precedence to claim,
And next the huge 'earth shaker' with his stately paces came ;
The others in due order, and the antique records say
The patriarch was gracious as a prince at a levée.
He'd quarters snug for each and all, except our arctic friend,
He said it was too far to northern latitudes to send
To get a frozen mountain from the land of snow and ice ;
While honoured guests from tropic lands would scarcely think it nice
To paddle in damp quarters, when the heat of Shinar's sun
Made water of the iceberg, and the stream began to run

Adown the steep 'companion way,' and flooded every berth,
 Whose tenants hailed from all the lands upon the wide-spread earth
 But, take it all for all, they found they'd decent board and bed,
 E'en cormorants were satisfied, for they were duly fed.
 The waters rose, until at length an upland or a mound
 To break the drear monotony were only seen around.
 Said Noah then, 'I think 'tis time that I should close the door,
 The rest are drowned, at any rate, I can't find room for more.'
 His crew was scant, but one of them was prompt to shoot the bolt,
 But not before the ancestor of famous 'Shankton Holt'
 (No stouter fox in Leicestershire before the hounds e'er ran)
 To clamour for admittance to old Noah's ark began.
 'Whate'er you do,' the stout fox cried, 'just mind what you're about,
 You'll play the bear with England if you chance to leave me out.'
 'With England! Where is England? We don't know such a place.'
 'Well, that's the home predestined for a brave and famous race,
 Whose regal sway from pole to pole shall through the world extend,
 Their empire know no latitude, an empire without end.'
 'What difference, pray, has that to make to letting you in here?'
 'Their warriors and their statesmen their steeds will boldly steer
 In wake of my descendants, and thus their sinews brace,
 Do more than half of all that goes to make a conquering race.'
 'Oh well,' replies the patriarch, 'I'll let you have a berth,
 But leave the cocks and hens alone; of all the beasts on earth
 You bear the basest character for prowling out at night.'
 Says Reynard, 'Well, Sir Patriarch, I'm much afraid you're right.'
 So Reynard got his quarters, and survived that dreadful flood,
 Kept on his good behaviour, for he never tasted blood.
 But 'Gopher' didn't suit his nose: the scent of Leicester gorse,
 The bay of hound, the huntsman's cry, the Quornites flying horse,
 Suit 'Charley' best, so, to this day the vulpine race incline
 To scamper through the Midland Shires, and swim 'The Whissendine.'
 He let the vixen in as well, and that's the reason why
 The Belvoir Quorn and Cottesmore boys can follow hounds 'full cry.'
 But, had the patriarch on the pair perchance have closed the door,
 The 'Music' had been silenced in the 'Shires' for evermore.

Canto II.

I now will proceed to narrate the lark
 Pug played with the crew of old Noah's ark.
 To readers like ours I scarcely need state,
 When mustered 'all hands' they were only eight.
 In ships of that size, so scanty a crew
 Find duties too many, and hands too few.



'Here goes!'

Y
L

For what they'd to do on that monstrous boat
E'en mighty Britannia had ne'er afloat
A crew that could manage to swab the deck,
To look out for reefs, and avoid a wreck,
Record the bearings in sunshine or fog,
Take soundings, and carefully keep the log ;
In short could do all that the ship demands,
That mustered but eight when you piped all hands ;
I think you'll admit then we're bound to say,
They hadn't much time in the ark for play.
Now Charley was one of observant sort,
So, feeling it dull without any sport,
And noting they all had their work cut out,
Said, ' They'll never notice what I'm about.'
He'd given his word, but I'm grieved to say
That keeping his word was not Charley's way ;
In fact, though I like him, it's my belief
The fox through each age is as arrant a thief
As he who erst harried the Cumbrian Vale
To furnish the larders of Annandale.
His box was a snug one, he'd ample fare,
In peace he could rest, he'd never a care.
That didn't suffice ; he wanted a prowl,
A relishing feast off a stolen fowl—
E'en cream that's been stolen's more sweet to cats—
Besides, Charley's dinner was *toujours rats*,
With which the huge vessel was amply stored,
They'd more than a myriad rats aboard ;
Some came through the windows, some through the door,
They bred in the gopher ribs and the floor.
Pug's good resolutions were all laid low
One morn when the rooster happened to crow.
Said Charley, ' Here goes, its an awful shame
To keep me so long without fowls or game.
He sneaked from his quarters, and reached the place
Where strutted the sire of the galline race,
Went straight for the neck, and that rooster's doom
Nigh sealed, when a thing in shape of a broom,
Well wielded by one of this old time crew,
Came down on poor pug and gave him ' a few,'
Then others came up and added their knocks,
With, ' Hang that old thief,' and ' Rabbit that fox.'
Poor Charlie sneaked back, but his bones were sore
And fate had a punishment still in store,

The patriarch came with his aspect grave,
 A thundering lecture to Charley gave,
 'Sir Reynard,' cried he, 'What are you about,
 Keep faith ! or, by Nimrod, I'll turn you out.
 Suppose you had chanced that rooster to slay,
 What would your descendants have had to say ?
 It seems about time you should understand
 You can't live "on board" the same as on land ;
 Behave yourself now, and, just for a treat,
 I'll give you sometimes a bunny to eat.'
 Of rabbits, like rats, they'd plenty in store,
 For rabbits bred fast in the days of yore.
 So Charley perforce grew content with his fare,
 In future he acted quite on the square.
 'Twas wise on the part of the wily old pug,
 To stick to the patriarch's quarters snug,
 But 'Secs.' of the Pytchley, and many hunts more,
 Who havn't a pile of 'needful' in store,
 Oft wish, as they stare at a poultry bill,
 That Reynard had managed that bird to kill.

ETON *v.* HARROW.

By 'AN OLD DRYBOB.'



PEOPLE in general, and admirers of the two great public schools in particular, are at last beginning to find out that the Eton and Harrow match, as carried on at the present time, is not quite the fun it was wont to be in former days. Nor is it ; and how the general public can be found in such numbers to pay half-a-crown for the pleasure of seeing a lot of smartly dressed people eating and drinking until they can't see, beats my comprehension entirely. Unless you are a member of the M.C.C., or have a friendly drag or carriage to go to, or a seat in the stand, you can see absolutely nothing of the cricket.

'You'll meet all your old pals there,' says some one.
 'Awfully jolly, dontcherknow, to meet one's old pals.'

'So it is,' I reply, 'so it is. I quite agree with you. But the difficulty is to find them.'

Find them indeed! why it's exactly like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay.

Take the huge crowd of picnickers as a body—the 'smart people,' as the Society papers call them, in the carriages. Pop them all into a bag, give it a good shake up, and turn them all out, and I wonder how many old Etonians and Harrovians, how many mothers and sisters of present Etonians and Harrovians, you would find. Not one half of the number I will venture to say. No; from a cheery reunion, the great match of the year in schoolboy annals has grown into a Society function of huge dimensions—a Society picnic, if you like it better—and it is a considerable change for the worse in my opinion, and I am delighted to find so many people taking the same view of it as I do.

'What is your idea, then?' you ask.

'Why, play the game alternately *at* Eton and Harrow, to be sure,' is my prompt reply.

The parents of the boys—at least, the majority of them—would back me up, I feel nearly certain. I don't suppose the boys themselves would object, and I feel quite certain the masters would not. The people who naturally *would* dislike the change of venue, would be the M.C.C., whose coffers would, of course, lose a considerable sum of money annually, were they deprived of this match taking place on their ground. But as there is no particular reason that I know of why that august body should be specially considered in the matter, I venture to leave them out of the argument.

The annual battle between the Winchester and Eton boys takes place on each school ground alternately, why not therefore Harrow and Eton? The Harrow ground certainly is not a particularly picturesque one, but where, I ask, would you match the Eton, with its fine elms, and unlimited space to stroll about? The Guards' band would, of course, be there to make things lively, and if you became tired of looking on at the match, what more pleasant than a stroll under the stately old trees, or about the old school itself?

Surely this would be pleasanter than looking on at a lot of people whom you do not know, and probably have no desire to know, airing their fine clothes. There would be no lack of feasting either, you may depend, at the two colleges, could this change that I recommend take place, for our public schoolmasters, from the head to his lieutenants, vie with each other on these occasions as regards hospitality, and it is always a case

of open house and a hearty welcome to their old pupils and friends, as all old boys will testify, I am sure.

'Then there are the ladies to be considered,' says some one. 'How would they like it? pretty souls!'

To which I reply, 'I do not see why they should not.' On the contrary, I should say they would prefer the fresh arrangement, for this reason:

Lovely Lady Blanche Milleflower, we will say, has mounted a triumph of the dressmaker's art for the occasion—something too sweet for words—a perfect dream, in fact, with the aid of which she hopes to instil envy into the bosoms of all her dearest and most intimate friends. What a much better opportunity will Lady Blanche have of showing her pretty self and costume off whilst strolling about in the Eton playing-fields, with her attendant cavaliers, than seated all day at Lord's on the top of her cousin, the Duke of Doublemupshire's drag.

The journey, too, from town is nothing, considerably under the hour to either place, and not a bit more tedious—if as much so indeed—as an expedition by train to Ascot or Sandown. Harrow, too, is as easy as well as a pleasant drive from London. The Prince and Princess of Wales, when they last paid a visit there, in Doctor Butler's time, came down by road I recollect. The drive to Windsor, though a bit further, is equally pleasant, as I know by past experience in the old days of Mr. Baily and the Windsor Coach.

When I first recollect the Eton and Harrow match, it was a very different affair to what it is now, and, to my mind, infinitely more pleasant. There was plenty of room to walk and sit about; you could find your friends with very little difficulty—in fact, it was a free and easy reunion in every sense of the word. Did you want to quench your thirst? If there was not a friendly drag in your vicinity, was not the cheery voice of the potboy to be heard all over the ground, shouting, 'Give your orders, gents!' And what more grateful on a hot day in July, I would ask, than a pint pot full of shandygaff, with a big lump of ice therein? Talk of champagne and claret cup! Pooh! they're not *in* it with the drink just named. Alas! the potboy and his cheerful cry have vanished long ago, never to return. He is much too vulgar to be tolerated in these kid-glove days of ours. Fancy asking Mr. Du Maurier's friends, Sir Gorgius Midas or Sir Pompey Beadle, who, though they probably would

be unable to tell you, if you were rude enough to inquire, where they received their education, naturally take the deepest interest in Eton and 'Arrer, and make a point of always attending it in state ; fancy, I say, offering either of those great and good men a pull at a pot of shandygaff ! Why they would faint on the spot—very likely die.

I should dearly like to see a change come o'er the scene, I must confess, and this desirable consummation is only to be effected in one of two ways. Either, as I have suggested, let the venue be changed from Lords to the school grounds—change about each year as at Eton and Winchester—or, failing that, induce Sir Pompey Beadle & Co. to think cricket in general, and the Eton and Harrow match in particular, a low and vulgar amusement to participate in. If he and his friends would only render themselves conspicuous by their absence—take themselves off, in fact—and allow Lords' ground on this particular match day to be as it 'used to was,' I should be content. I am bound to say, though, I should much prefer the former arrangement.

'HEATHER AND HILLSIDE,'

By A HERON.

HOT ? I should rather think it was—broiling. The very fountains in Trafalgar Square looked tepid, and the slabs in the fishmongers' shops were apparently the only cool places in the whole of the metropolis. How I did pity the clerks in my lawyer's office. I longed to invite them *en masse* to come with me to the North, and breathe some pure Highland air, such as I myself looked forward to inhaling in the course of the next twenty-four hours. There was one poor pale-faced lad to whom such a change would have been life itself. I felt quite ashamed when, leaving my address for business purposes, I was obliged to mention in their hearing that I was bound for Scotland. It seemed so selfish to say so, and to leave them there to swelter and drudge amidst the heat and noise of London. As I passed the big hospital by the river, and glanced up at its windows, and reflected how much suffering there needs must be within its walls, I would gladly then and there have renounced my Northern trip

if, by so doing, I could have done good to any one of its inmates.

We idle, well-to-do people, who are blessed with health, and means, and the good things of this life, little know how good they are till we have lost them.

It is certain that the man who can enjoy the present wisely ever reaps a double pleasure, since both present and past are his. Half the people in this modern world of ours never pause to think how good the present may be. They are perpetually hankering after an impossible future. With them it is ever 'to-morrow,' and 'to-morrow,' and, like the daughters of the Horseleach, they are for ever crying out, 'Give!' 'Give!' They cannot sit on the rock or stile and be thankful and contented, or be satisfied with a moderate day. They prefer the excitement of slaughter rather than the pleasure of sport. Nothing suits them but driven grouse, and hundreds of them, a loader, two guns, a portmanteau full of cartridges, and to have their names chronicled in the fashionable papers. To my mind, this is very much what the yankee calls 'T'much.' Why, half the pleasure of grouse-shooting is gathered from its surroundings. What is the good of being amidst beautiful scenery if you cannot stop to look at it? One might just as well be shooting pigeons at Hurlingham.

Thank goodness I am not bound on such an errand. I know that there will be many a good, honest tramp over hill and heather before me, and no monster 'bags' to be rattled together.

My host is not one of these latter-day sportsmen, though, albeit, as keen and as good a shot as ever stretched a leg across a moor. There is no rushing and tearing after game with him; it is ever a hard and honest day's work to get together a good bag.

Our party is annually the same. Year after year we meet at the dear old stone house, so snugly placed in the shelter of the hill-side, full of warmth and colour, with the lichen on its tiled roof, its walls bright with roses and creeping plants, and the garden ablaze with flowers. And none the less cheery is the welcome which ever greets those who cross its threshold.

Right glad I am to find myself comfortably seated in the Evening Mail bound for Scotland. I have wisely taken the precaution of booking my berth in the Pullman Sleeping Car, knowing from former experience how over-crowded the Northern

trains are at this time of the year, and now, after the worry and struggles of a day of business and shopping in London, it is a relief to sit down and rest, and feel that my labours are, for the present, at an end. Slowly and almost imperceptibly, as the hands of the clock point the hour of starting, we glide out of the big station. No fuss, no hurry, no banging of doors, no shouting or ringing of bells. Only slow trains on insignificant lines indulge in such performances. The Northern Mail needs none of these; its dignity is its own. It is of far too much importance, and too much the 'real thing.' Does it not carry Her Majesty's mails? Just as quietly and unobtrusively will it glide into the station at Glasgow at its journey's end, and, I may add, just as punctually. Through and over hill and dale it tears along, with scarce a stoppage during its entire run, and this it does day after day, through sun and snow, through gale and storm. Telling the conductor to call me when we reach Carlisle, I settle myself in my berth, and, overcome by the fatigues of the day, am soon sound asleep, and when he wakes me can scarce believe that we have reached the quaint old northern city. Such is, however, the case, and being conscious of a thirst worth half-a-crown, I come to the conclusion that a big tumbler of milk and soda-water, with just a dash of whisky in it, will be a sound and advisable mixture; so, hailing the conductor, I dispatch him to fetch it. On his return a voice with a strong Scotch accent, from the other end of the car, exclaims, 'Ye may just get me one, too,' and before he can take his departure another and yet another is ordered. Evidently my mixture seems to find favour, for nearly every occupant of the car gives the like order, and there is much gulping, sighing, and smacking of lips, and ere long, a good deal of snoring; but luckily the noise of the train drowns much of the latter; I, too, fall asleep again, and, for aught I know to the contrary, join in the inharmonious 'fugue' till awakened at Kilmarnock, when it is time to rise and dress, and get one's belongings together. A cup of coffee is no bad thing, and serves to keep out the morning air. By the time this is finished, the tall, red chimneys of 'Glasgie' appear in sight, and a few minutes later we steam into St. Enoch's station. After a bath and breakfast, which tend to comfort one after the night's journey, I have one or two commissions to execute for my host before leaving Glasgow by the mid-day train, and a stroll about the city passes away the intervening time.

A few more hours of railway travelling, and I arrive at the little roadside station amongst the hills, and, sure enough, just as he has done these many years past, my friend is waiting to greet me. A short drive of a mile brings us to the old house. There, too, just as usual, 'Vera,' his favourite setter, stands in the doorway, wagging her tail in welcome. Last year seems but as yesterday; can it really be a year ago?

How cool, and fresh, and comfortable everything looks. No stuffy 'high-art' furniture and hangings here, only the simple comfortable surroundings of an old-fashioned country house; so different to the heat and noise of London. All our old party have assembled again, and as none of us have met since the last time we were here, we have much to tell and talk about. Our host assures us of good sport, and the grouse, he says, are plentiful and strong.

No matter what the season, his moors always carry a fairly strong head of game. Care and attention to the heather has much to do with the fact, and keeping the old heather down closely, doubtless saves much disease; but I expect that the good feeling which exists between the shepherds and himself is perhaps the chief reason. Shepherds are ever the best keepers; treat them well, and a moor will flourish. If there is a want of good feeling between them and the laird, rest assured that, in a bad season, when every bird is doubly valuable, many an egg will find its way elsewhere. Grouse eggs are not difficult to find, and if the shepherds don't know where they are no one else can tell them. They know better than do the keepers, for they are ever on the spot. Despite our preparations for an early start in the morning, the smoking-room clock shows us that we have far exceeded the hour for bed which wisdom dictates; but it is so pleasant to sit and talk of sport past and sport to come. The air is so bracing up here, and the whisky is so good, that we may venture to take liberties just for once, and, ere we ascend the stairs, the hour of midnight chimes out.

The cheery notes of an otter bugle rouse me the following morning. The laird is going round the house to wake us up, and, to judge from the shouts of laughter which resound, he seems to have been pretty successful in his endeavours. As the sun is shining in at the open window, there is little inducement to stay in bed, even if it were possible to sleep, so we are soon gathered round the breakfast-table.

The 'plan of campaign' is discussed, and it is arranged that we shall shoot what is called Meg's Moor before luncheon, and that afterwards we shall divide into two parties, the laird and M—— taking one beat, and F—— and I the other. A short drive of a couple of miles brings us to the 'trysting-place,' where we are met by old Forbes the keeper, his two sons, Donald and Allan, with a couple of gillies to help walk the line and carry our bags, and the setters, two brace of grand-looking 'Laveracks.' Scarcely have we spread ourselves out into line when old Vera 'draws' on a covey. I have seen her do so in this very spot more than once before. Up they get, the old cock leading the way, but only the laird and M—— get a shot at them as they make straight off to their flank. Three down to three barrels; so far so good. As we cross the moorland road we spring another covey, which, from the marks, have apparently been dusting themselves in blissful ignorance of its being the 12th. The laird again gets a 'right and left' well in, and we each get a single bird. They have gone right for us, and we shall come on them again ere long. The sun is getting hot, but on the higher ground there is a clear brisk air which is very refreshing after the trying work of climbing the hill-sides, and at the end of a couple of hours we are glad to stop and rest a bit. Up to the present the laird and M—— have been having very much the best of it, as most of the birds have risen to them; it has been only occasionally that F—— and I have had a chance, and we have both begun to shoot a bit wildly in consequence. It will happen thus sometimes; it can't be helped. If we were to change sides, the luck would still be theirs. A quarter of an hour's rest at times works wonders, just as walking round one's chair is said to do at whist. The whisky too is undeniable, and up here, on the moors, the cold spring water blends well with it, and they seem made for each other. I must confess that F—— and I were beginning to feel just a trifle jealous, but, though the whisky warms our hearts, wisdom guides our potations. Not so M——, he ever prefers water diluted with whisky, and on the present occasion, feeling that he is a bit 'on the shoot,' and that his luck is in, he very unwisely yields to the charms of his favourite tippie, and, when we start again, the combined effects of the sun and 'John Barleycorn' begin to assert themselves. He has previously been shooting well and steadily; now, however, he is burning a good deal of powder with very little result, and the

laird's gun is the only straight one of the two. F—— and I manage to get a bird now and again, and so it goes on till luncheon-time.

As we near the spot selected for our midday meal, we are cheered by the sight of the lady portion of our party awaiting us. They have got everything ready for our arrival, and very glad we are to relinquish our guns and rest on the grass beside the little spring. A sprig of white heather forms a fitting centre piece on the well-spread cloth. White heather is said to bring good luck—good luck to us means death to grouse. Old Forbes reports our bag to be eighteen brace and a half. The greater number of these the laird has brought to 'book,' or, rather, I should say, to 'bag.' If there *is* one time rather than another when a man, whose mind is rightly constituted, feels at peace with all the world, it is surely on such an occasion as the present. The hour of rest has been well earned, and the wages are well worthy of the 'work.' To lie on one's back in the cool shade and smoke, and gaze, after having been 'well done by,' and 'done right well,' is bliss indeed; to watch the ever-changing hues of the heath-clad hills, and the white sails visible on the distant ocean; light hearts and cheery voices around one; what more can the heart of man desire? If not content with such as these, he must be either in love or a brute.

But all things must have an end, and ere long we prepare to start afresh. The laird has decided that F—— and I are to take Donald and one of the gillies and work round on the homeward beat, apart from M—— and himself, who are to work to the southward of us. As we start, there is very much good-natured chaff as to which of the two parties will make the larger bag, and odds are freely laid and taken. The beat before us is, as we know, a rare good one, and F—— and I start off in great hopes of making amends for our indifferent luck of the morning. We can, as we proceed, discern the laird and M—— far away on the opposite side of the valley which lies between us, and now and again a puff of smoke, followed long after by the report of a gun, tells us that they are well amongst the birds again. F—— and I push forward, and now our luck begins to mend, we get warm to the work, and for a time the shots become frequent. We are both shooting well, and make up for lost time; we have scarcely wasted a single cartridge, and Donald, finding he has enough to do to

carry the birds, hands half of them over to the 'gillie.' As we work homewards, we come across one or two 'broken' coveys, which, lying well, afford some pretty shooting and we 'slate' them to some tune. As we come to the end of the beat the sun is getting low, and we can discern the laird and M—— sitting on a rock by the roadside awaiting us. They, the dogs, and the little gamecart form a picturesque group, such as Landseer would have delighted to paint.

And now to count the slain. 'Twelve brace,' says the laird; 'can you beat that?'

Calling Donald forward, we count out our bag, triumphantly exhibiting 'sixteen brace and a half,' thereby beating their record by nine birds, and making the total bag 'forty-seven brace and a half.' Not so bad for four guns, and just as nice a day's sport as a sportsman could desire.

This festival of 'St. Grouse' is but poor fun for the birds themselves? Many a fine old cock grouse rang out his last challenge at daybreak this morning. We Britishers may well be proud to think that we alone are favoured with the Red 'Grouse.' The gallant 'Muircock' makes not his home elsewhere than in the British Isles. He is our 'very own,' and what a truly game and noble bird he is too! How bold and straight he flies! A faithful mate, unlike his first-cousin, the Blackcock, he sticks to one wife. A Blackcock on the 'spree' in the springtime is the vainest, biggest fool in all the bird world. A veritable flirt, he loves and flies away, utterly disregarding any vows matrimonial he may have made, and thinks of nothing but himself and his appearance. The cock grouse, however, is a pattern father and husband, and is what matrimonial advertisements term 'thoroughly domesticated.' He is a brave, beautiful bird, and every inch a gentleman.

But it is time we wended our way homewards and dinnerwards. A pleasant downhill walk lies before us, and, as we stroll along and watch the hills glowing and purpling in the setting sun, we feel that yet another 12th may be recorded with a white stone.

A LIGHTNING TOBOGGAN RIDE.

By WILF POCKLINGTON.

O to the toboggan slide? Well, no! I have had about all the shooting through the air on a slide that I care for; but if you fellows will stay home and smoke a "Villar" with me, I'll tell you a story worth hearing!

'That's better! Well now, it was when I was out West for the old Peconic Lumber Company. You remember, Dick, that I went up from Frisco to the King's River district to bounce the superintendent of the gang at Camp Sequoia, in order to have a little big-game shooting in the Sierras. The ride I speak of was down the flume, and to explain matters clearly I may as well briefly describe it. In cutting lumber in the Sierras, the one great expense has always been its transportation to the railway, and this was generally done by floating the logs to the nearest river-point, and then dragging them by mules across the country to the track. Our company had plenty of capital, and the foresight to see that, if they went to the first great cost of building a sixty-mile flume for the transportation of the logs, they would bring the whole business of the district to their terms, and so form a trust or consolidation that would increase their profits to almost any figure at which they chose to place them. So they built it, extending sixty miles from the Sierras high snow-line to the station and mill on the plains. It consisted of a raised open spout, for want of a better term, made of inch and a quarter planks; at the start, where the grade was steepest, it was about forty-three inches wide, and this increased as the decrease in the grade necessitated a greater bulk of water to float the lumber. So that at the bottom end, at the station, the width was about sixty-four inches, and at each successive increase in width a greater flow of water was added from side pipes to that in the main flume. To preserve regularity of fall in the down grade it was necessary at various points to carry the flume or spout on enormously high and fragile-looking trestles across canyons, chasms, and around sharp spurs of mountains that lay along the route. Some idea

ASCHMANN

"Over he rolled"



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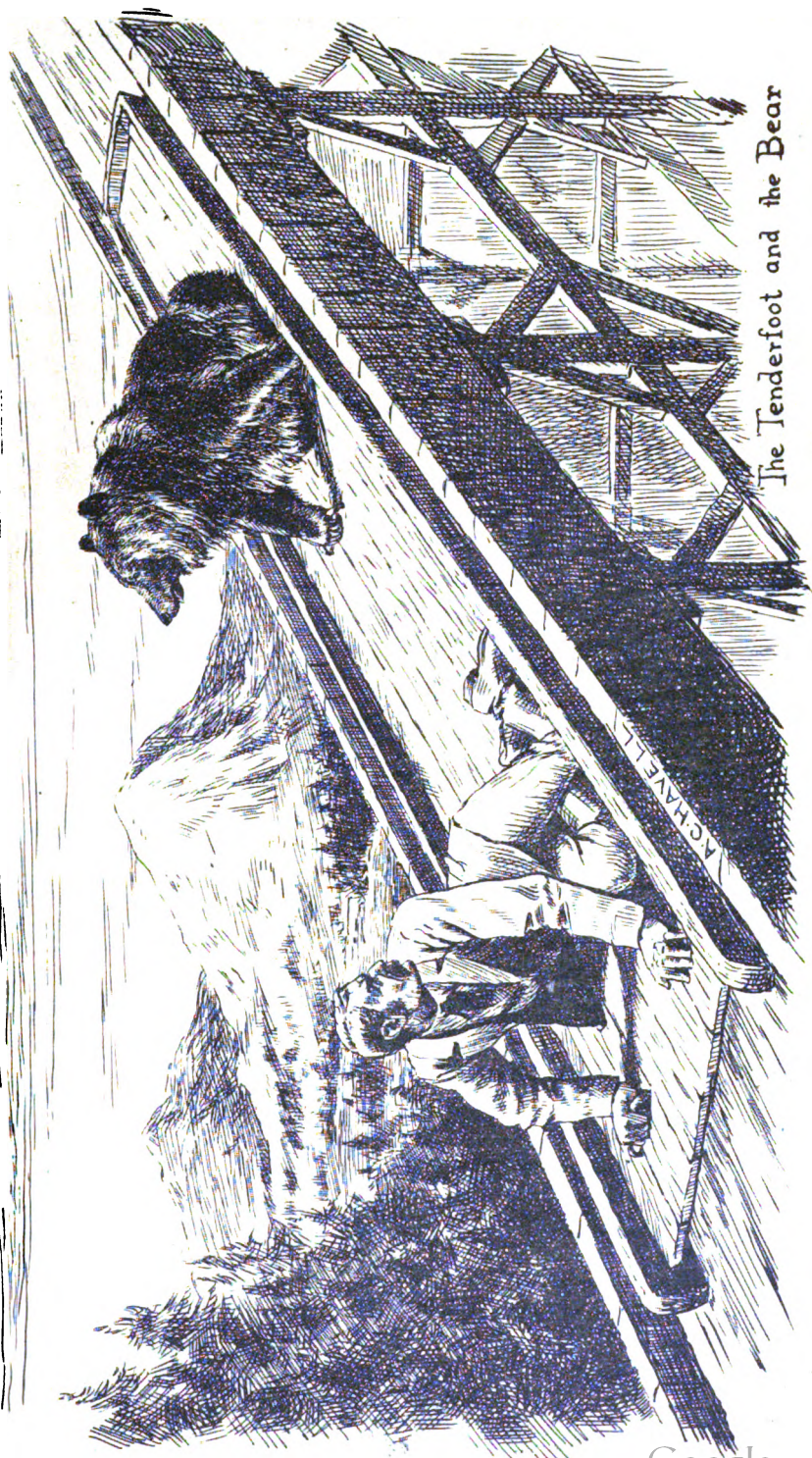
of this engineering feat may be formed from the fact that in the first twenty-seven miles there were used no less than 5,000,000 feet of lumber, most of which was carried from the plains to the required altitude on the shoulders of men ; in all there was used just 11,500,000 feet of lumber and eighteen tons of nails to complete the flume from the snow-line to the mill near the station on the plains. As the lumber was trimmed and finished ready for the mill, it was rolled to the head of the flume, and at convenient times rolled into the spout log by log, and sent swirling and spinning to the mill, far down, out of sight, unless a black dot in the distance could by force of the imagination be construed to represent the booming Western lumber town of 10,000 inhabitants, the one link for miles and miles, in every direction, between civilisation and the trackless waste of prairie. I arrived at Camp Sequoia all right and had a royal time. There was plenty of mountain sheep, and other game to be had, and a fine big-horn is no mean reward for a day's stalk, hard work though it be, and somewhat dangerous. My ambition, however, was to get a good grizzly pelt, but for some weeks luck was against me, and I felt inclined to clear out and return without it. The new superintendent, however, persuaded me to remain until the thermometer dropped below zero, saying that then the difficulty would not be to find the grizzlies, but to keep them out of the works, for the mischief they would do in a night was not easily replaced. "But," I urged, "if I stay until then, I am here for the entire winter, and that will not suit me, as a journey down the mountain in winter is not to be thought of." At this the superintendent smiled, and replied : "That is easily arranged ; when you want to leave, one of the men shall go down the flume with you and come back on snow-shoes." "Down the flume ! On a log ?" I asked. "Well, no, not exactly ; we have a flume boat ; no one goes down the range on foot." So after inspecting the flume boat I agreed to stay. It was a curious craft. I cannot think of any more appropriate simile than a sheep-trough with one end knocked out. A long, narrow thing, with three hand-holds at the bottom and no seats. It was sixteen feet long, and twenty-eight inches wide, and had a false bottom raised about three inches from the main bottom. The boat was put into the flume with the open end for the bow, then the force of the water at the back board carried it down, and any that backed over, or was forced in from the front, flowed along under the false bottom, and kept the passengers

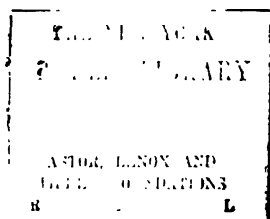
dry. So I remained, confident of being able to return at any time. Snow commenced to fall early in November, and the cold gradually forced the mercury down until it only registered a few degrees above zero; still no bears appeared to cheer the prospect, and I wished I had gone down earlier, as my knowledge of bear pointed to the fact that their seeking the snow-line instead of hybernating, as winter came along, was, even for a grizzly, eccentric behaviour. However, I concluded that men who lived up there knew best, and I waited a little longer. One day there was carried on the rarefied air the unmistakable sound of hounds and men, and the superintendent informed me that they had commenced hunting the lower ranges and our turn would come right away; that the bears, in their endeavour to escape the dogs, would mount to the higher levels, and, succumbing to the extra cold, would seek, first food, and then a hole in which to hybernate, adding that they would be very ferocious, and dangerous customers to tackle at short range. Two evenings later one of the lumbermen took the entrails of a big-horn, and carrying them a mile or two down the range, trailed them at the end of a rope up to the camp, eventually throwing them into the open flume. This was to get rid of them, and thus keep the animals hunting around, as, if they were buried, the bear would dig them up, feed to repletion, or as nearly as he could manage with his find, and go off to sleep. The next morning we were out early, and sure enough there were the tracks of two large bears, crossing and recrossing each other, so that it was all but impossible to track them by sight. There was only one dog in the community, and he a notorious cur, with no more grit than a coyote. However, we had to make the best of the material at our disposal, and so turned Pongo lose. He found the bear in less than half an hour, and apparently mistaking it for a dog began to play, receiving a cuff which knocked him spinning and sent him yelling home at an express rate. I was shooting with a Holland & Holland double express, using some shells of American make, which on one or two occasions had given me a little trouble to extract; this I had forgotten in the excitement of the bear-hunt, and to that oversight I owed all my trouble that day. When the dog ran home, the bear went after him, and down the road from the "trimming horse" they sped. I was posted about one hundred yards from the spot where the scuffle took place, and knew they must pass within fifty feet of me, so I remained perfectly quiet,

only moving to raise my rifle to the level where I guessed the bear's shoulder would come ; a second later I saw his snout pass my foresight, and pulled the trigger. The ball caught him fairly behind the shoulder, and over he rolled, scratching and biting at the wound, thus turning his hind quarters to me, when I put another shot into the back of his head which finished him. As I stood up to reload (for with all my exultation, I by habit did that before advancing to examine my prize), I heard the superintendent yell something, and turning my head, I saw the second bear, with eyes blazing with rage, come tearing down the side path at the bottom of which I stood. She was about sixty yards away when I sighted her, and had evidently both seen the slaughter of her mate and had also been wounded by one of the men, higher up the range, for her fore shoulder was covered with blood, as if she had been shot in the breast. I did not lose my head, but quickly prepared to push in a couple of fresh shells, to shoot her at a short range as she charged, and I had plenty of time in which to do so. I pulled and tugged, however, at those two empty shells, but not a hair's breadth would they move, the bear was within twenty feet of me, and I was getting stage-fright or bear-fever, or something of that kind, when I heard a voice cry, "Run man, run!" and turning, I fled for dear life, in what direction I never considered until I saw that in my blind haste I had run into the *cul-de-sac* of piled logs leading to the head of the flume. There was no way out ; the logs were piled twenty feet high on either side, presenting a perpendicular front ; before me was the flume, with its background of massive boulder, rising fifty feet or more, behind me was the bear, and (glancing over my shoulder) not forty yards away. In a fix like this one decides quickly. My eye caught sight of the flume boat lying by the side of the woodwork. To slide it in, and throw myself into it was not the work of ten seconds. I heard a yell from the men on the rocks around, the boat jammed in some way, and as I leaned over and pushed it clear, I felt the sudden "dump" of some heavy body, and turning my head as the boat shot down the flume, I saw the bear at the extreme end. I don't know how the old plantigrade felt, but it seemed to me as if the bottom had dropped out of the universe, and we had fallen with it. The sudden shock of the lightning leap down the first steep grade of the flume threw me flat on my back ; more by luck than anything else my hand struck a

holdfast, and I held on to it for dear life. Turning my head I looked at the bear, and found, to all appearances, that she was paralyzed with surprise. She had gripped one side with one paw, and held on to a holdfast with the other, while her hind legs stuck out at right angles, jammed against the side of the boat in a strenuous endeavour to get the best purchase possible. Then I turned and looked ahead, wondering what was the best thing to do. All was settled for me in a glance—there was nothing left but just trust in Providence and hold tight. Far as I could see stretched the mighty flume, looking like a thin, spidery web threading down the mountain side. Gloomy rocks and forest trees flashed past in an unbroken blur on either side, when the flume ran near the ground, and then in a breath we seemed to fly into the air, and dash over trestles to cross some ravine or canyon in whose depths, a thousand feet below, thundered a torrent. And all this time our speed was increasing, until it became impossible to look ahead, and I could only lie close and grip tightly, keeping my eyes fixed on my strange fellow-passenger. What would happen when we reached the end? I had only my knife, for my rifle lay on the landing at the flume-side, where I had thrown it when I launched the boat. Suddenly the boat gave an extra “zip” and I thought we had jumped the track; fast as our speed had been before, it was now doubled. We had reached the steepest piece in the whole length, and were shooting down what I afterwards learned to be a drop of 250 yards, *with a grade of 1200 feet to the mile*. Fancy it, and it will make you catch your breath; ride it, and you will lose what little you possessed when you started. I had a dim perception of seeing logs and lumber lying around, which had jumped the track at this point, and then we shot out into the air and I closed my eyes, until I felt another twist, and opening them found we were at the bottom, running at the old pace, while the incline we had just descended stood up like a wall behind us. On we went, now hugging the wall of a rocky gorge, now sweeping round a sharp spur, or over a canyon, with an open strip to follow where the trestle was 130 feet high, and swaying with every breath. The rate of speed now sensibly decreased, and I noticed with a shudder that the bear also perceived it. To my surprise she sat up with a most benign look, and was evidently enjoying her novel experience, swaying to and fro, and gazing around as might a human being. She had either for-

The Tenderfoot and the Bear





gotten me—or was hopelessly dazed. Once more I looked ahead, and far below I saw a large basin, the mill pond, and around it a number of dark specks standing still. Another minute and they were recognisable as men, and then in a breath it seemed we ran in amongst them right up on the dry land. Eager and friendly hands dragged me out of the boat, and before the bear knew where she was there were half-a-dozen lariats round her and she was a helpless prisoner. We were safe and sound among the mill hands.

‘It appeared that as soon as we started, the superintendent ran to the telegraph, and wired the news of our journey, thereby calling out the mill hands, who promptly fixed the wooden tray on which the boat slid up on to the land, and waited for us anxiously enough. We had come the sixty miles in twenty-eight minutes, and now you know why I have but little pleasure in an ordinary toboggan slide; when I want a run I’ll just go back and take another slide down the flume, but without a bear next time.’

Many men have ridden down a lumber flume, but few, if any, I doubt, with the exception of my friend Markham, have ever come down as a tenderfoot, with a bear for a companion.

TRICKED.

By ‘COLUMBUS.’



DEACON JONES was ‘as square a man as ever cut a deck of cards.’

At least that was the euphemistic opinion of the inhabitants of the pretty but still somewhat primitive city of Cleta.

Cleta is a Western city, just bursting the shell in which it has slumbered for some fifteen or sixteen years, never during that period exceeding in population six or seven hundred souls. It is situated in Kentucky, ten miles from Lorisville on the south, and nine miles from Spruceville on the north-west, and is a place of call between the two larger communities, each of the three being about thirty miles from the Louisville and Nashville track. It possessed a wonderful mineral spring, which had been

famous among the Indians for untold ages, and gradually became widely known and highly esteemed by the white settlers for its curative qualities ; so much so that the directors of the road decided to run a branch line of track through the three cities and boom Cleta as a hydropathic city.

Under such circumstances a town in the West springs up like a mushroom, and three years after the first train of cars passed the new depôt, the city had increased to nearly six thousand inhabitants, streets were laid out, shade-trees lined the side walk, commodious stores made their appearance, churches raised their spires into the air ; electric surface cars ran in the principal thoroughfares, gas works were erected, the springs were cleaned out and enclosed with masonry, a spacious hotel erected, a large bath-house and infirmary, with a resident doctor attached to it, and the suburban villas all around showed the ever spreading line that marked where the city ended and the vast swelling prairie commenced.

Deacon Jones, as he was familiarly called, lived in one of the largest of the outlying villas ; he was one of the earlier settlers, and had watched its growth from an incongruous conglomeration of graziers' dwellings, incomprehensible stores, and indescribable saloons, all edifices of the type known as 'dug-outs,' which means, literally, a hole in the ground with a roof over it, and a sloping entrance cut from the level turf downwards to the door ; from this embryonic stage he had seen the city grow into its present prosperity, and was still watching it, as though it all belonged to him, as indeed a fair portion of it did.

He was an English gentleman by birth, tracing his descent through the Cholmondley-Jones and the De Quincey-Jones of the Conquest and the Crusades, who had wandered to America in his youth, and seeing money in the new country of the West, and acquiring a liking for the people and their freedom from conventionality, had settled amongst them, importing a quantity of good blood horseflesh, which in process of time found its way into the first stables of the Blue Grass region, and from thence throughout the country.

The immense stables and grazing ground comprising the ranche, were situate about six miles to the east, on the prairie, and the Deacon hovered between the two places, passing all his time in attending to his two passions, viz., his horses and the growing city. He was esteemed a smart man of business, fixing his own price, which usually ended the matter, as it was a case

of make the deal or leave it, according to your fancy; it was also quite an understood thing, that any one who could trick the Deacon in the horse trade was 'just too smart for comfort.'

His daughter Nellie was a merry little lady of nineteen summers, the heroine of three European tours, who, during a recent visit to Chicago, had managed to fall in love with a half cousin of hers, a rising lawyer, of whom great things were expected by every one but the Deacon, who, consequent upon some family disagreement, was prejudiced against him, although he had never seen him.

'A graceless scapegrace, Nellie!' he had said when asked his sanction to their engagement, 'a lazy young good-for-nothing, like the rest of the family! Brains indeed! Let him show me that he has some business method about him before he asks me to give him my little girl. I guess it's the money, Nellie, and not you he's after!'

'But, indeed, papa, you never give him a chance to let you know him, or see what he is like. You pooh-pooh every report of his cleverness and progress, and won't look for yourself, just because you don't like his family! As if he had any choice as to what family he should belong to. I think it very unkind of you.'

'Well, well! child, you are young enough yet, and have plenty of time before you to bother your head about such things,' answered her father; adding to himself, 'and very likely to forget him in favour of some later aspirant. Why on earth she could not accept Lord Braintree's offer puzzles me. But girls are girls nowadays, and new countries have new customs.'

Nellie seemed to make quite a trouble of it for a little time, but she was soon singing about the house again, and riding backwards and forwards to the ranche with her father.

One afternoon a well-dressed young fellow walked into the ranche, leading a valuable young horse evidently suffering from a severe attack of colic.

'Good day, Deacon,' said he, in a frank, cheery voice, 'glad to catch you here in person. My horse has just been seized with colic, and I must get home to night. Can you lend me a decent mount to gallop across with, and I will return to fetch mine to-morrow. You know me, I guess? Harry Mason, of Lorisville, although it is two years since you saw me!'

Now Mason, the rich banker of Lorisville, was one of

the Deacon's oldest friends, and one to whom he had been under many obligations in past days, so the old gentleman replied :—

'Harry Mason? Why how you are changed, boy! If two years at Yale turns out such men as you, why I'm sorry every boy in the Union isn't obliged to go. Here, Sol! take the saddle off the colt and put it on Bay Regent for Mr. Mason; one of the best horses I have, Harry, worth 40,000 dollars in a year's time, if a cent. Bring him back to-morrow or next day, and meanwhile we'll cure the colt. Guess you have been over riding him, eh?'

Harry laughed, and mounting Bay Regent, saying,—

'Excuse my hurry, Deacon, I will stay longer to-morrow, commend me to Miss Jones,' he rode slowly away in the direction of Lorisville.

To-morrow came, and the next day, and the next, but no Bay Regent, so the Deacon told one of the men to ride the colt over next morning, returning with the horse. In the afternoon the Deacon was at the ranche, looking at some yearlings being exercised, as was his custom, when two men in a buggy drove into the yard, the driver addressing him—

'Good evening, Deacon, don't suppose you know me, although I know you. I'm the Sheriff of Orange Co., this is Mr. James Sefton of Woodville. We're after a horse that was stolen from them last Friday by that derved hoss-thief, Dandy Jim. A black colt rising three years, sixteen hands, with a white stocking on the off leg; seen anything of him, eh? Well, no objection to our looking through, just for form's sake, I suppose?'

The Deacon arose, and asking numerous questions concerning the theft, showed his visitors through the place.

'Nothing there, gentlemen; you see! No horse thief comes around me, guess I'm too well known. I'm a trifle too old at the game for those slippery gentlemen, and they give me a wide berth. Hello there, Billy! what about Bay Regent?' he cried, as his man rode the colt back into the yard.

'Why Mr. Harry hasn't been at home these four months, and Mr. Mason don't—'

'Say, where did you get that colt?' interrupted Mr. Sefton.

'Why, young Mason, of Lorisville, rode it in here last week sick with colic, and borrowed my Bay Regent, and—'

'Young Mason be hanged! That's my colt—only they've painted his off leg!'

'Your colt, Mr. Sefton!' exclaimed the Deacon. 'Excuse me, but I have known Mr. Mason for years, and I have no personal acquaintance with you, or with your friend the Sheriff, so pardon me if I require positive proof of what you say!'

'Proof! That was Dandy Jim! As to the colt being mine: It has a white off hind leg, and I mark them with a three cent silver piece in the neck, for branding is no use among these derved greasers. See here!' And stepping to the colt he quickly drew his knife-point across a piece of skin held between his forefinger and thumb, and, turning to the Deacon, showed him a three cent piece covered with blood in his fingers.

What could the Deacon do? Frontier customs still existed. The Sheriff showed his certificate and badge of office, and they led away the colt. Deacon Jones was in a tremendous rage. He rode hurriedly to the house, informed Nellie of what had taken place, and rushed off to his lawyer at once. Nellie sat and considered the matter over, then demurely walked down town to the telegraph office, and sent off a voluminous despatch to John Halstead, Esq., Solicitor, Chicago.

For several days the Deacon did nothing but run backwards and forwards between his lawyer's office and the house; but no tidings were heard of the whereabouts of Dandy Jim, who seemed to have got clear away with Bay Regent. The Cleta lawyer had placed the matter in the hands of a smart Chicago firm, who made a speciality of tracing criminals in the West, and nothing was heard until the astounding tidings came that the Sheriff in Orange Co. knew nothing whatever of the case, had certainly never been to Cleta, and that his impersonator and his companion must have been accomplices of the actual thief, to obtain the colt and make a clean sweep. Deacon Jones was nearly beside himself with rage—not so much for the loss of his horse, as of being worsted by the swindlers.

'There is no doubt, Nellie,' he said, 'that three cent piece was never in the colt's neck at all; it was simply a clever trick, and I am worse than an idiot after all my years of experience. I would give 50,000 dollars to catch those scamps.'

At last, nearly a month afterwards, the Nashville train rolled into the depôt, bringing with it Dandy Jim, Bay Regent, and the man who had recovered them. The trial came on. Jim was convicted, and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment; Bay Regent was returned to his owner, and the Deacon could

not find words in which to thank his lawyer for the management of the case.

But the old lawyer laughed.

'No, thanks to me, Mr. Jones; this is the gentleman you must thank—Mr. John Halstead, of the firm of Halstead & Herron, Chicago, and, our worthy Deacon, Mr. Jones—one of our most promising young men, if not the best of them.'

'John Halstead?' queried the Deacon, looking him over with a smile, 'then I guess you'll not object to accompany me home for a few days, so that we may become better acquainted, as befits our relationship.'

John Halstead went home with the Deacon, and gave a long account of how he had followed Dandy Jim across the prairie to the track; how a collision occurred and bruised Jim considerably, fixing him up in hospital for two weeks, and destroying for a time all trace of him; how at last he obtained a clue, and ran the thief to earth, and how the other two scamps only reached the frontier two days ahead of him, or he would have had the whole gang.

'But how did you hear of the case, John? Chicago is a long ride from here!'

John looked at Nellie and laughed. 'Oh! I was travelling to obtain change of air, and hearing of it introduced myself to your lawyer and took it in hand, as I wanted some exercise.'

The Deacon laughed quietly as if he understood it all. He began to fancy Halstead had both brains and ability, and finally gave his consent to the marriage, saying:—

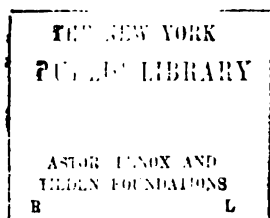
'I am not sure which would cause me most regret, to part with Nellie, to have lost Bay Regent, or to be tricked by a horse-thief after forty years' experience.'

CARP FISHING AT LANGDON POOL.

By 'WILLOW.'

THREE or four years ago I experienced considerable difficulty in obtaining any really good fishing, that is, in my own county; and I found that wherever I fished, either in water that was open to the public, or in places where I gained the right by payment of so much





per diem, there were really no fish worth speaking of to catch, or, if there were (I have since had reason to believe in their existence), they had grown so cunning, in consequence of being continually fished for by so many different people, that they would not look at a bait, much less take it. One of these places was by a mill on the Mole, that, for want of a better, I used pretty frequently to visit in the vain expectation of enjoying a little sport; but, though I always started high in hope, and with some new and infallible method of luring the fish, I almost as invariably returned with a comparatively empty basket. Sometimes I had four or five nice roach, or perhaps a good chub, but as I generally caught them at the outset, and during the remainder of the day, a few little roach and perch only would reward my endeavours, this made it only the more tantalising.

The mill of which I speak is not a very large one, nor is it very old. About fifty yards above the wheel there is a small foot-bridge over a sluice where some of the water leaving the main stream falls to a considerable depth, forming a large and deep pool, at whose further end the surplus water has an outlet, and after running two hundred yards, or thereabouts, it again joins the river.

One evening when returning rather later than usual from a day's fishing in the river below the pool, I passed by the latter, and, to my surprise, as I rested for a moment on the little bridge, I saw the placid surface of the water broken by a large ring, and at the same moment a great fin was for a moment visible. Astonished, and not a little excited, I put down my basket, and waited to see more. Nor was I disappointed! Very soon there was another ripple and swirl, caused apparently by a big fish; but the dusk was deepening so quickly that it was difficult to distinguish things properly. However, I waited till it was quite dark, and every few moments during that time a fish would come to the surface, and then silently seek the depths once more.

Now I knew an old man in the village from whom I occasionally procured baits, and he was—must I say it?—a thorough old poacher, and knew not only the run of every hare in the vicinity (there were not many) but also every swim worthy of mention to be found in four or five miles of the river's course. It was to him, therefore, that I went, full of my discovery. The old man was busily engaged making a landing-net when I entered, and

as he was rather deaf, I had to shout—rather than speak—that which I had to say. He nodded his head several times during my recital, and when I had finished he said :

‘Yes, sir, yes! I knew they was there. I found it out a long time ago. But nobody else seems to know of it, for the place is never fished, and, if it was, nine men out of ten wouldn’t catch anything.’

‘But what fish are they?’ I asked.

‘Why, mostly great carp—faces like pigs they’ve got, sir, and there’s a few nice perch, too. If you’d like to try the place, I’ll ground-bait it, and, if so be it’s agreeable, I’ll come with you ; and mayhap we might get hold of one or two. Let me see (scratching his head thoughtfully), to-day’s Tuesday; say Friday, sir! I must bait two nights, anyhow.’

I was fain to be content with this arrangement, though I would have liked to try my luck on the morrow ; but I was told that it would not be ‘any mortal manner of use’ if I did, and that if we only waited till Friday we might get ‘one or two.’ I then asked him what he was going to bait with. He requested me to follow him, and led the way to a little rough grass patch out at the back, where he quickly cut half-a-dozen nice fresh sods with a spade. Returning to the kitchen, he placed them in a large earthenware pan, and from an old canvas bag he poured over them about a couple of pints of mixed worms ; these, he told me, would quickly crawl into the sods, which would then be ready for use.

The next morning, early, having selected a swim, he threw in one of these *bonnes bouches*, and two in the evening, about dusk, and so on, the following day.

It was arranged that the old man should call for me at half-past four on the Friday morning, so that we could make an early start. The day came at last, and when I passed out of the house I noticed that the atmosphere was very close and warm, whilst a little gentle rain was falling in a desultory sort of manner. Sure enough, when I opened the little gate at the bottom of the garden, there was David coming along under the hedge in the adjoining meadow, and loaded with rods, tackle, and landing-net.

With scarcely a word passing between us beyond the usual greetings (for David was always very silent and reserved on occasions of moment like the present), we set off across the wet, sweet-scented grass, through three large meadows, where the

lazy cattle raised their heads and stared at us, as if wondering what we were about ; and I remember almost treading upon one of David's friends—a hare—who had made her form in a tuft of long grass just on the brow of a gentle declivity. Away she went ! I stood and watched her as she ran, till she slipped through the hedgerow at the bottom of the field ; but David walked stolidly on, as if hares were far too common to be worthy of his notice.

But to resume. We passed out of the last meadow through a gap in the hedge, by an old oak-tree, and found ourselves in a narrow little lane that led us eventually to our destination. When we arrived within fifty yards or so of the water, David told me, in a sepulchral whisper, not to go any nearer at present, but that we would put our tackle together where we were. Accordingly, we set about doing so, and I was about to run a quill float on to a fine-drawn gut cast, when a frown from David restrained me.

'That won't do, sir ! That won't do !' he exclaimed ; 'you aint goin' to catch these fish like that, you know. I've got something better than that.' As he spoke he took from his waistcoat pocket a little square piece of cork, and, having cut deeply into it with a knife, he drew the line tightly into the cleft, and placed one tiny split shot about two feet above the hook. He now went forward, creeping stealthily to the place which he had ground-baited, and then, just as carefully, returned to me, and lighting his pipe, told me that we might as well smoke, as there was nothing to do for the next quarter of an hour. The reason of this he informed me was to give the fish time to recover from any latent suspicions they might have entertained. So we smoked away in silence for the next fifteen minutes, when, motioning to me to imitate him, David took his rod in his hand and cautiously approached the swim, while I followed him just as carefully.

The spot he had selected was a favourable one, as, about two feet from the edge of the bank, on the shore side, the ground was hollowed out, so that when we sat down all was hidden from the water side except our heads. There were no bushes to interfere with us on either side for some distance, but, on the right, there were two old willow-trees growing on the very margin of the water, about ten feet from us, and David whispered me that the roots might prove troublesome if we happened to hook a 'contrairy sort of a one.'

We baited with two red-worms on each hook, cast out our lines, and then sat down on an old piece of tarpaulin that David had brought with him for that purpose. The rain still fell in a slight drizzle, and not a breath of wind stirred the heavy atmosphere, while all was silent except now and then the plash of a heavy drop falling from the willows into the pool.

We had sat there nearly an hour without moving, during which time I had been watching the antics of a couple of water-rats that were running about over the willow-roots, when David suddenly placed his hand on my arm, and nodded his head gently in the direction of the floats. Mine was quite motionless; but I noticed his was moving about in a very eccentric fashion. First it ran a little way out (about a foot or eighteen inches), and then back again; and this occurred three times, after which the cork was again motionless. And so it remained for nearly five minutes, when it began to move off, gently but decidedly. When it had gone some little distance, David raised the point of his rod, and struck, and it was at once apparent that a battle with a 'big one' was about to commence. The instant he felt the hook the fish dashed off outwards, and David—*volens volens*—had to let his line run. A few moments later, however, he managed to turn his fish, which now bored back towards us till within a few feet of the bank, when he began to swim slowly and solemnly backwards and forwards, as if to show his determination to fight and his knowledge of his own supreme strength. He kept up this stately procedure for some two or three minutes, and I was beginning to wonder what would happen next, when suddenly off he went again, with a rush even more vigorous than the first, and the wheel rattled round with greater velocity than, I suspect, David wished or expected. But the old man presently succeeded in turning him; and again the fish came back and recommenced his slow and heavy tactics. Then there was another rush, but not so fierce as the last; and it soon became evident that the fight was about to be brought to an issue. There was a splash, and with great excitement I beheld the glorious glint of his golden side for the first time. I leant forward with the net, and David, getting on a little purchase, literally drew the fish into it, when, with an effort, I lifted him out, and laid him gasping at our feet. He was a splendid fellow—a carp of, I thought, about seven pounds; but we had, as I believed, no scale with us, so his real weight was not ascertained till later in the day.

After disengaging the hook, David calmly pulled out his clasp-knife, and to my regret (though I knew it was the most merciful thing to do) pushed it in deep, just at the back of the fish's head; there was a quiver of the brown-gold body, and all was over! At the same instant I heard a long, solemn rumbling of thunder in the distance. It seemed to me as if it had rolled forth in remonstrance at the deed, and I felt for the moment almost as if we had committed a crime. But David did not seem to share my sentiments; in fact, he took no notice of the thunder (though he must have heard it) beyond jerking his head backwards, in the direction from whence the sound had come.

'We shall have it presently,' he muttered; 'but look after your float, sir! There it goes!'

As he spoke, I turned quickly round, just as my float was disappearing, and, in the excitement of the moment, I struck with far too great a force. But—wonder of wonders!—the line did not break, and the next moment it was running out, yard after yard, as the fish made off in the direction of the willow-roots.

'Hold him in, sir! Hold him!' cried David. 'Once he gets there, you'll never see him again.'

In answer to the old man's direction I put on a greater strain, and after a moment or two, during which the issue of the struggle hung in the balance, I gained the mastery, and began slowly to reel up, though every inch of line was stubbornly contested. Rather to my surprise the fish now began apparently to tire, and came to the surface of the water, side uppermost. But, to my dismay, a series of terrific plunges now followed each other in quick succession. The line held, however, and in another minute (whilst another and much louder peal of thunder greeted our ears) David dexterously made use of the landing-net, and with a grunt of approval lifted the conquered quarry ashore, where it speedily lay lifeless beside its fellow.

At this juncture I discovered a weighing scale which had hitherto lain unnoticed at the bottom of the basket, and with this we soon ascertained the weight of the two fish. David's weighed $7\frac{1}{2}$ lbs., and mine just under 7 lbs.; and splendid specimens they were. Whilst gazing on them with a sense of exultant admiration, mingled with, I may say, a touch of pity, my thoughts were rudely disturbed by the rain, which began to come down in great heavy drops, that 'popped' in the water like a shower of small stones, and directly afterwards a flash

of lightning lit up the fast darkening surroundings. This was followed by a loud peal of thunder, and I looked at David to see what he thought about it; but he was just on the point of striking another fish, and seemed quite unconscious of everything else. Next moment I saw him quickly raise the point of his rod, and as a fresh tussle commenced the lightning again blazed, and another peal of thunder—much louder than before—shook the skies.

Away went the fish, first out and then back, while every instant the storm was growing worse. A strange spectacle it was, to see the old man standing there—now letting out his line, now winding it in—engaged in a determined struggle with his quarry, whilst all around the thunder boomed and bellowed, and vivid flashes of lightning illumined the black and sullen water. The rain which had, during all this time, been falling in absolute torrents, suddenly ceased, and the silence that ensued seemed even more ominous than the crash and clatter which had preceded it.

‘Let him go! Cut your line!’ I shouted to David (for I was certain it was dangerous to stay where we were). He answered not a word; but I could see that he was doing his utmost to keep his fish away from the willow-roots. At that moment there was a sudden and terrible glare, instantaneously followed by a crash as if everything were coming about our ears. I was blinded and dazed for a moment, and then I heard an exclamation from David. He touched my arm, saying, ‘Come along, sir! we had better get out of this. I’ve lost him, and he’s got half my line, too, all through they roots; so come on, sir.’ We quickly picked up our saturated things, and hastened over the little bridge into the mill, where we were condoled with on our condition by the miller, who asked us what sport we had met with. David looked hard at me as he replied, ‘Oh! two or three little roach, and a gudgeon or two.’ I could not help smiling at his shameless mendacity, but, under the circumstances, I thought it best to hold my tongue.

It was now getting on towards ten o’clock, and having hung our coats up to dry we waited there, in our shirt-sleeves, smoking, while the storm continued to rage outside with unabated fury. About eleven o’clock, however, the peals of thunder began to grow less and less frequent, and the storm was practically over. So we ate a crust of bread and cheese, and leaving our coats in the care of the miller, we again set out for the pool.

A gleam of sunshine now broke forth, and whilst smiling upon the scene, imparted a solemn grandeur to the black, heavy clouds rolling away to westward.

How sweet and fresh was the atmosphere! All nature seemed revived, and the great drops glistened and sparkled on the leaves and grasses like a thousand brilliants. The dry warmth of the sun, too, was very pleasant to us after our experience of the earlier part of the day, and it was not long ere we again had our lines in the water (David having refitted), and once more we watched our floats with unremitting attention. But we were destined to spend many hours idle, for it was not till nearly seven o'clock that our patience was rewarded, and the fish commenced feeding again. First my float moved off, without any previous warning, and on striking, I hit the smallest fish of the day, though a fine specimen of its kind—a perch of over 2 lbs. Shortly afterwards, David was likewise engaged, and, after that, we were more or less busy till the light failed us, and the growing gloom warned us that it was time to give up the fascinating sport and think about getting home.

There were ten carp in all, besides the perch, and the aggregate weight of the catch was a little over 57 lbs.

As we trudged homewards through the still wet grass, my gaze fell upon the fast fading glories of the crimson sunset, and contrasting in my own mind its peaceful beauty with the raging elements of the morning, I made some remark about the thunderstorm to my companion.

'Ah! sir,' said David, 'there isn't many as would have stood by me like you did. I'll never forget it, and there's my hand on't. There! I felt a bit shaky myself, but I was forced to hold on.'

Since that day David and I have fished Langdon Pool more than once, and with fair success; and when I met the old man a little while ago, I reminded him of the old days, saying that they would never come again. He answered that that might be so, but all the same *he* knew of a roach swim where—he would almost guarantee—none were under half-a-pound in weight, and he wound up with the question: 'Will you try it, sir?' I need not record my answer.

PRAIRIE PERIL.

By 'CHAMELEON.'

COWBOY'S life is a pretty eventful kind of existence, and the stories one hears in the cities concerning the life they lead is calculated to make any one who knows anything at all about it, laugh pretty considerably.'

The speaker was Colonel Tom Madison, a cowboy himself once, and now the owner of a ranche in Northern Texas, to which gravitated, every fall, about half a dozen congenial spirits, for shooting, hunting, and fun generally.

Colonel Tom, as he was usually called, was one of the genuine type of the great Western community that so favourably impresses a stranger. He was tall, well-knit, with slightly grey, keen flashing eyes, an open hand, and an abnormally large heart ; always ready to help a friend, and equally ready to stamp with both feet on any underhand business or trickery. He lost or spent his principal when a young man, and possessing the true grit, instead of loafing on his relatives, he turned out into the West, and went from State to State, farming in Dakota, silver-mining in Colorado, a lumberman in Michigan, and finally a cowboy in Texas. He worked hard, as all cowboys have to, and instead of riding into the nearest town and throwing his pay into the saloon-keeper's drawer, he bought stock with it, which increased year by year until he gave up his post as cowboy, and became master ; in ten years he was one of the most prosperous cattle ranchers in Northern Texas, and universally respected.

When the words above alluded to were spoken, we were sitting at dinner in his house, having had a hard day's ride after some stampeded cattle which we had all been enlisted to look up ; and one of the guests, carried away by the novelty of a long gallop over the boundless prairie, had been gushing considerably over the probable pleasures of a cowboy's life.

'I do not think you would be much in love with it until after the first year, then perhaps you might like it,' continued Colonel Tom; 'there's a strange fascination about it with all its hardships, and I often feel like throwing my leg over a horse, and doing a hard day's work myself; and, what's more, I generally do it, when the fit's on me. As to its hardships, here is a case in point. Last year one of my boys was sent to drive in a herd of cattle: he had to bring them about thirty miles, and cattle will not travel more than four or five miles an hour, especially where water is kind of scarce. Well, he started along with them alone; there were about two hundred head, and he knew he could manage them. As he went along the winter sun appeared to grow more and more gleamy, the clouds seemed to pack and roll instead of float, and the boy looked anxiously to the north and north-east. He knew what was coming, and that he had ten miles yet to go, and it was no use trying to hurry the herd, for they would not do it. Suddenly the air grew icy cold, the cattle lowered their heads, and moaned in a weird way, packing themselves together, there being no stragglers as there had been an hour earlier. The cowboy let his reins drop, and beat his hands and arms about his body to try and keep warm. The wind now came in puffs from the north, icy-cold, and keen as a knife; a few flakes of snow fell, and then a fine sifted shower of ice came driving down on the wind. It had been snow, but being frozen hard, had broken into particles, and driving against each other had become like so many needle points, which seemed to pierce through clothing and skin, right into his very marrow. What fell on the ground, was picked up by the wind, tossed around, and driven again and again into the air; the respiratory organs of both man and cattle acted with difficulty, they could not see a yard in front of them, but wandered along, instinctively, towards home.

'Yes! that was a blizzard, to be caught in which means death, nine times out of ten.

'Well, while the storm was at its height, one of our men around the yard heard something rasping at the bars and went to open them. In stalked the 200 head, not one missing, and behind them rode the boy in charge. When spoken to he returned no answer, when touched he was icy cold and rigid. A cry for 'help' brought me out, we got him into a warm bath, and then blankets; and after three hours' hard work we got

him round ; but it was touch and go, another five minutes would have finished him, and only the instinct of the cattle saved his life. Not much poetry in that sort of thing, is there? Well, here is another occurrence, by no means an uncommon one.

'The prairie at certain seasons of the fall, is subject to grass fires, and no one knows how half of them originate; the buffalo bunch, or mesquit grass, will, as a rule, rather smoulder than blaze, but at these times it becomes as dry as tinder, owing to the prolonged drought. We had a lively time, some years ago ; some stranger had dropped a cigarette or something incandescent in the dry grass about six miles away to the west of my outfold, which is about four miles from the house, and the grass was soon in a blaze. I and a dozen of my boys were moving cattle when we caught sight of it, and it gave me a bad start, for the wind was blowing from the west, and so would carry it straight to the ranche house. What were we to do, water is scarce on the prairies, and hose and engines considerably more so ; and by the time we saw the fire, it must have run nearly three miles. A prairie fire does not flame high in the air, as pictures in the papers often represent, and some travellers' (?) reports would have you believe ; but it is a low, ugly, sinister fire that, veiling its track by a dense smoke, creeps quickly forward, never leaping in the air except where it strikes timber. Riding up to one of the steers I shot it, and down it dropped without a struggle. 'Now, boys, look sharp ! get me that skin, a minute now is worth ten hours to-morrow.' At it they went; they were not flaying a skin for the tanyard, to be nicely dressed, but they left a good four inches of meat adhering to the inside of the skin, literally holding the skin up with one hand, and carving it off with a knife held in the other. This makes it a very heavy hide, and that is what is required. They had no sooner finished that skin than down came another steer, and I started them at that. Calling one of the men, I said, "Here Harry, just catch on here and help me. Hand me your rope." Taking his lariat I tied it to one of the pendulous shanks of the hide, and fastening my own lariat to the other shank, I gave my rope a twist around the horn of the saddle, and told Harry to do the same. I then called to the other men, and told them to follow as soon as they could. The heavy skin now lay on the ground with the hair side uppermost. We vaulted into the saddle, and setting spurs to the ponies away we went through



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the dense smoke, I just in front of the thin line of fire, Harry just behind it, on the hot blackened ground, dragging the heavy hide over the fire and literally rubbing it out. On we went at a breakneck speed; knowing that even a handful left would respread itself as badly as before, and certain that the boys behind would extinguish any lingering traces that we might leave. The thick, heavy smoke wrapped me and my horse as in a shroud, and, despite the handkerchief tied over my nose, I could scarcely breathe; my eyes smarted, and my skin seemed to crackle and "zizz" under the heat of the quick burning grass. Every now and again a tongue of fire would catch a mullein stalk or reed, and leap out right under my pony's feet, singeing the hair on his fetlocks, and making him swerve to one side with a sudden jerk that almost unseated me. It was no child's play, and we did not spare our horses; no Eastern horse could have stood the strain, mile after mile, as these did, but their gameness is a byword among horsemen. I was minus moustache and eyebrows, the fringes were singed off my clothes, my pony was singed all on one side, and was just giving out, when Harry, being clear of the smoke to a certain extent, shouted, "Only another half a mile of it, boss," and I shook my nag together, and just managed to clear the end before the game little beggar gave out. Then I looked back. Far as we could see was a long, broad, sinuous, blackened strip; here and there were small patches of flame, which my boys were busily exterminating, and in front of this, three miles away, was my house and buildings, just reappearing from the dense cloud of smoke that was rolling over them, still hugging the ground as though loathe to leave it. We were a handsome-looking lot, but we saved the house just the same. No, I don't know who invented this method of extinguishing a fire, its origin is lost in antiquity; of course the cowboys claim it (they would claim the Creation if you asked them about it), but there is no doubt that when the Indians had their annual big hunts and killed plenty of buffalo, that they became gorged and careless, and a spark from their fires igniting the grass, the squaws dragged the fresh hides over it to extinguish it.'

'What is a "maverick," Colonel?' queried the Tenderfoot.

Colonel Tom laughed.

'That's cowboy's slang; they call a steer that is not yet branded a "maverick," a horse-herder is a "horse-wrangler," a

horse-breaker is a "bunco buster," a horse is a "cayuse," to dress well is "to rag out," to go out on the prairie is "to hit the flat," whiskey is "family disturbance," to eat is to "chew," a hat is a "cady," his whip a "quirt," his rubber coat a "slicker," his leather overalls "chapperalls," his revolver "forty-five," and a dish of bacon is "overland trout." There are scores of other phrases that would take you a year to become conversant with. No, Sir, take my advice, and keep off the cowboy business until necessity forces you into it. The boys are a rough, hard lot, but good fellows in the main, and those who you hear of painting a town red, lassoing citizens, or riding through firing revolvers at random, are considerably rather the exception than the rule, and you can say so on my authority when you get East again.'

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.



XCEEDINGLY cheerful and full of racing character are the new series of four coloured prints, representing the different phases of the 'Sport of Kings,' recently issued by Messrs. Fores, Piccadilly. They are from the pencil of Mr. A. C. Havell, and fully maintain his well-earned reputation as a spirited delineator of sporting subjects. Plate 1 represents an assemblage of ladies and gentlemen in the paddock at Epsom, *Inspecting the Competitors*, the central figure being Ormonde, with Archer up. The scene is gay, bright, and as full of sunshine as was the last Derby Day. The next plate transports the spectator to Sandown, where the horses are *Preparing to Start*, the most prominent being Ayrshire, with F. Barrett up. Plate 3 shows the Grand Stand at Kempton, and *The Parade* for the Jubilee Stakes, with that grand horse Bendigo in the foreground, bestriden by J. Watts. The Birdcage at Newmarket completes the set of four, and here is to be seen Prince Soltykoff's Sheen *Waiting for the Verdict* after having won the Cesarewitch.

The same firm has produced a lifelike portrait of the winner of the last Derby, *Sir Hugo*, also from Mr. Havell's painting. He is represented as being led about the paddock,

and forms a worthy companion to this artist's series of Celebrated Winners.

The Rod and River, by Major A. T. Fisher, is a volume that will deeply interest fishermen, who will sympathise with his lamentations on the continued practice of polluting rivers and streams, to the detriment, if not the destruction, of sport, notwithstanding an Act of Parliament to the contrary made and provided. But the real interest commences with the knowledge, statistical and anecdotal, obtained from the profound experience of the author, of those grandest of fishes, salmon and trout, and with his ingenious and practical methods of filling the basket with those edible delicacies. The author asks, 'Wherein lies the charm of fishing? It is a question I have often asked myself, and to which I have never as yet been able to make a satisfactory reply. It most certainly does not consist solely in the killing of fish, for, if fish were to be caught all day and every day, it would be wanting. I can only conclude that it must be the difficulty and uncertainty of the sport which form the attraction.' The keen angler will really revel in the wealth of information imparted as to fishing gear, varieties of rods, hooks, flies, &c., the different styles of casting and where to cast, and will enjoy the fishing reminiscences of Loch Leven and other well-known places of piscatorial resort. Many a pleasant hour will be passed with this entertaining volume, which is published by Richard Bentley & Son.

Sampson Low, Marston, & Co. have published a work entitled *The Racehorse: How to Buy, Train, and Run Him*, from the pen of Lieut.-Colonel Warburton, R.E. These three very important points are ably dealt with by the gallant author, but not the least interesting and valuable part of the volume is Chapter XVII., which deals with accidents and diseases in a thoroughly comprehensive and practical manner. There is much to be said in favour of his views on the subject of roaring; he says, 'I have always considered that the prevalence of roaring among thoroughbreds in the United Kingdom is due to the unwise rule which arbitrarily dates the age of thoroughbreds

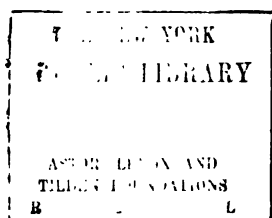
from the 1st of January. Breeders, to gain a few months' time, cause their mares to foal in January if they can, and the delicate foal is dropped in bitterly cold, damp weather, whence it is likely to contract disease. More than that, the mare is deprived, at the time when she most requires it, of the rich spring grass which nature has provided for her at the natural time for foaling.' And then he goes on to express an opinion that the better policy for breeders would be to have their mares drop foals in April or May. Difference of opinion may exist on this point, but the book abounds in matter about which there can be no dispute.



"He came straight up
& fell over backwards!"

JE

see page 232



FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

TOLD IN THE TRAIN.

By G. H. JALLAND.

THE train was just on the point of leaving Leicester, where I had been spending a couple of days in search of a cheap crock or two, to hammer about during the coming season. There had been a sale of cub-hunters from different hunts, but the four or five I had cared about had run up to prices higher than I wished to spend ; at last in despair, I had bidden for an ancient, though hunter-like looking bay, which was eventually knocked down to me. I was the solitary occupant of the smoker, where I had settled myself with my pipe and some papers, and as the tickets had been examined and the doors locked, I looked forward to being undisturbed till we reached Nottingham, which was to be the first stopping-place. But at the last moment, the door of my compartment was hurriedly unlocked, and with the help of two officials, a stout little man came flying head first into the carriage, trampling and tripping over my toes, and eventually landing a regular crumpler against the opposite door, where he lay puffing and panting, emitting between the puffs a not very choice selection of oaths. Naturally I was rather annoyed at this sudden and unceremonious intrusion, to say nothing of the injury to my toes ; and when it dawned on my fellow-traveller to offer an apology for any hurt he might have done me, I'm afraid I did not accept it very graciously. After he had recovered his wind, he got up from his position on the floor and soused himself into a seat exactly opposite to me ; then he proceeded to take a big black cigar from a waistcoat pocket, and asked me if I'd got a light. I handed him my matchbox, and whilst the lighting of the

villainous-looking and worse smelling, cigar was in progress, I had a good look at him over my paper. I at once recognised him as being one of the numerous horsey-looking men that I had seen in the Repository at Leicester. He was of the horsiest horsey; a more pronounced type it would be impossible to find. He was attired in a tightly-fitting, single-breasted frock coat of a most decided check, with roomy knickerbocker breeches of the same pattern; his short bent legs were encased in brown leather leggings, and a square-topped hat, with the flattest of brims, was tilted at an angle over a most unprepossessing face. He had sharp ferrety-looking eyes, closely cropped mutton-chop whiskers, a double chin, and a thick bull neck that bulged over, his tightly tied hunting scarf, and one wondered how the man escaped strangulation. He was strongly redolent of brandy, and, altogether, I came to the conclusion that I had never been boxed up with a more undesirable companion, but thought if he'd only let me alone, I could manage to put up with him till Nottingham was reached. He handed me back my matchbox with a 'Thank you, sir, much obliged. Do the same for you some day, I hope,' and after he had taken several long pulls at his cigar, he enquired, 'Been to the sale? Thought I saw you there. Poorish lot of hosses, eh? Did you pick anything up?' I had no desire to enter into conversation, so I only answered in monosyllables from behind my paper; but this seemed to have no effect in checking my companion, who went on: 'I got half-a-dozen of one sort or another. Just been boxing 'em; they're on behind. Made me late for the train. Close thing, wasn't it? Want a horse or two, do you, sir? Well, you can't do better than have a look at mine. I've got a score or so, all seasoned hunters and fit to go. Take one of my cards, sir,' and he handed me a square of pasteboard with

CHAS. HEMPTON,

Crocker's Mews,

Nottingham.

Hunters—Sale or Hire.

engraved on it. I thanked him, and hoping to stop his mouth, handed him one of my papers. He accepted it, and, in return, offered me a large flask of brandy, which he produced from one of his heavily-flapped pockets. I declined his offer, and buried my face more deeply in my paper; but it was all to no purpose,

he was in a talkative mood, and not to be repressed. He glanced at the columns of the paper for a few minutes, and then he began again, 'Rum thing this about that poisoner chap. He'll have to swing, I expect. I see to-day that he did for three of them, and most likely they'll fix the other on him. Rum chap. Laudanum he used. Talking about laudanum, I saw an old friend to-day at Leicester who has taken enough of that stuff to kill half a town. Don't mean a man, but a hoss—a bay hoss that stood in the twelve-stall stable, two from the end.'

'With the white hind stockings, and a cut below the near hock,' I interrupted, pricking up my ears.

'Yes, that's him,' answered my companion. 'You noticed him, did you? A grand shaped one, wasn't he? Now, sir, I'm not telling you a lie when I say that bay hoss made me. Yes, sir, if it had not been for him, most likely I should be dealing in knackers and old ponies, like I was when I first came across "Billy"—that's his name.' And he paused to have another pull at his flask. 'Now look here, sir,' he continued, 'I'll tell you all about that hoss, and how it was he used to earn me money. It's just about fifteen year since I first saw Billy. He was a five year old then, so that makes him twenty now. I see they put him down in the catalogue as ten, but that makes no matter, he's twenty if he's a day. Well, sir, I was coming from Howden fair, riding an old worn-out pony, with three or four others tied to his tail, when, as I was passing through Netley village, a groom-looking chap stopped me, and asked if I would buy a hoss his master had to sell. I said of course I would, if the price was right, for I was always open to do business. "Oh, your own price will buy him," he replied, "come on this way, and I'll show him to you." With this he walked off down the street, and I followed. A short distance down he turned into a stable-yard, which was close to the best-looking house in the place, and I rightly guessed it to be the parson's. "Here he is," he said, throwing open the top door of a loose box, "I'll go and fetch master." I got off my pony, and looked into the box, where stood just about as good a looking nag as I'd ever seen. He laid back his ears when he saw me, and switched his tail, as much as to say, "Keep out of this!" So I didn't go in. My word, he was a beauty. A big blood hoss that looked like carrying fifteen stone in Leicestershire, he was as fat as butter, clean on his legs, and looked as though he'd never done a day's work in his life. (No more he had.) When the old gent came, I

touched my hat and said, "Want to sell this hoss, guvnor? What's his price?" "Now, my good man," answered the parson—these are his very words—"before I ask you to purchase the horse, you must first let me tell you that he is of a most vicious disposition. I bred him myself from a favourite mare that lives in the paddock yonder. He has had the kindest treatment ever since he was born, but in spite of this, he has turned out utterly useless, and has been given up by all the horse-breakers in this district as incurable. I believe he has half killed two men, and at last I have decided to get rid of him. I would have had him shot, but it seems a pity to destroy so beautiful an animal. There, now you know all about him, and if you are still willing to purchase him, you may pay my man here anything you may think he is worth," and with this he turned and went back to the house. Well, I haggled with the groom a little; finally I gave him four pounds, and I can safely say I never laid out four pounds better before or since. I got the hoss home all right—he led well enough—and the next day I got the harness on him, and with the help of some pals, put him in a cart. Yes, we got him in, but he did not stay there long, for the moment his head was loosed, he went straight up on end, and down he came smash on to his side; then up, then down. Next he went right into trade, and in less than a minute had kicked himself clean out of harness, and broke the old cart into splinters. "Not much of a harness hoss," I said; "we'll see how he rides." So I got a saddle and bridle and mounted him. I could ride a bit then, and very few of em could put me down, but "Billy" wasn't an everyday hoss. I had no sooner said "Let go," than down went his head, and he set to bucking like mad, and bellowing like a bull. I stuck on as long as I could, but I lost first one stirrup, then the other, and the next thing I knew, I was lying on my back, and "Billy" was galloping loose round the yard. We soon caught him, and up I got again. I had hardly touched the saddle before he came straight up and fell over backwards, crushing my body so badly that I didn't feel like trying him again, so we put him back into the stable. The following week was the Great Horse Fair at Horncastle, and I decided to take my gentleman there, and see if I could stick somebody with him. Horncastle was a good distance off—my home was in Hull then), but I took him there by easy stages, and, of course, I led him. The fair began on the Monday, and

on Saturday night I put up at a village inn about ten miles away from the town. After I had done the horse well for the night, I walked down the little street in search of a shop, and soon found a place where I guessed I could get what I wanted ; so in I walked, and asked for an ounce of laudanum—you could buy it anywhere then, and no questions asked. The man behind the counter handed me a little bottle ; I paid for it, and went back to the inn. Now, sir, maybe you'll wonder what I wanted that little bottle for. Well, I'll tell you. I stayed over Sunday at the inn, and spent half the day strapping away at "Billy's" coat, and I can tell you I got him looking grand. On Monday I was up in good time, and, after feeding him and giving him a rub over, I cleaned up my saddle and bridle, and had a bit of breakfast. Then, with the little bottle in my pocket, and a twitch I had borrowed in my hand, I went into the stable. Yes, sir, that's what I did with the laudanum ; "Billy" got it every drop. Next I put the saddle and bridle on, and, after arranging with the ostler to look after the old pony I had ridden from Hull, I mounted "Billy," and started off to the fair. The little bottle had done its work, and a child could have ridden him. He had lost a lot of his fine action, and he hung rather heavily on his bit ; but he hadn't an atom of mischief left in him, and I had to keep touching him up with my whip, or, I believe, he'd have gone to sleep on the road. When we got into the fair, and he heard the whips cracking, and saw the other hosses, he was lively enough ; and, as soon as I rode into the Bull yard, a dealer wanted to buy him. I gave the chap a good trial, and I could see he was very taken with "Billy," for he behaved perfectly. Of course, the man wanted to know where he came from, what he'd been doing, and all about him. I've quite forgotten what I said, but you may be sure it wasn't quite the truth. Then he asked the price. "Eighty," I said, as bold as brass. "Give me a fiver back and I'll take him." "All right ;" and in ten minutes time I walked out of the yard with my saddle and bridle on my arm, and £75 in my pocket. Now, sir, some men would have been satisfied with such a profit, but I wasn't. I knew there was lots more money to be made out of "Billy." So, instead of quietly hooking it out of the town, I went to a barber and has my whiskers off, then to a second-hand clothes shop, where I swopped my things for others as different as I could find. And again I went into the fair. There was not much trouble in finding where "Billy" was

stabled, for the man who had bought him was a London dealer and a large buyer. I knew by the afternoon that most of the effects of the little bottle would have worn off; so I had a bit of dinner, and then hung about to see what would happen. I forgot to tell you that amongst "Billy's" vicious tricks, he was about the most dangerous brute with strangers in the stable that I've ever seen, and I've seen some bad uns too. He'd let nobody, not even a man he knew, go near him when he was feeding, and was equally handy with his fore or hind end, to say nothing of his ivories. Well, about three o'clock, I saw a groom come limping out of his stable, and I knew the circus had begun. I saw him go up to a couple of other grooms, and after he had talked to them a minute they went into the stable, each carrying a stick. Now a stick was always fatal with "Billy," the very sight of one drove him wild. I never saw two men in such a hurry to get out of a stable. In about five seconds they came flying through the door, tumbling over each other in their keenness, and I could hear "Billy's" heels playing music on the walls of his box. They were neither of 'em damaged much, but he'd marked both quite enough to stop them from trying to go in again. Just then the owner came up, and the three grooms told him what had happened. So he went and took a look at "Billy;" but you may be sure he didn't venture inside the stable. By this time quite a crowd had collected round to see the fun, and amongst them was a man who volunteered to go in and fetch the hoss out. The dealer gave him leave; so, with a bridle in his hand, the man opened the door and went in. He was a plucky chap, and sure enough he brought "Billy" out all snorting and trembling. Then he said he'd ride him if they'd get a saddle. They brought one, and the man soon had it on. But "Billy" never let him mount. How he did rear and fight and strike! I never saw him worse; and after trying for some time, the dealer told him to put the hoss back into the stable. The dealer was furious, and swore he'd have the liver of the chap who had taken him in. All the time I stood there grinning to myself, but dare not offer to buy the hoss, as I was afraid my voice would be recognised. But I meant to have "Billy" back if possible; and I didn't leave the yard until all business was over for the day, and the stables locked up. Next morning I turned up to see what was going on; and I found the man who had tried to ride "Billy" the day before leading him out of the stable. At first I was afraid he had bought him, but I

followed him down the yard into the street, and when I saw him lead the hoss to the auction, I knew he'd soon be my property again. Yes, I bought him from under the hammer; and this time he cost me a tenner. In less than an hour I had faked his white hind stockings, given him another little bottle, and rode into the fair. I had half-a-dozen customers directly. A doctor who lived in the town, after trying him in his gig, gave me £50 for him, and thought he'd got a rare bargain. Within six hours he had satisfied his new master, and I sent a man to buy him. Again I got him back for a tenner. Well, sir, the fair lasted a week, and I sold "Billy" four times. When, on the last day, as I led him out of the town, you may be sure my pocket was pretty well lined. "Not sold the hoss, then," said the ostler at the inn yard where I had left my pony. "No," I answered; "it was a bad fair. No demand for a hoss of this class," which was perfectly true. Well, sir, "Billy" and I visited all the big horse-fairs in England for about five years, and I don't think there's an auction yard in the country which he has not run up. The auction yards were rather troublesome to manage, as the horses have to stand there in stalls the day before the sale; but I used to give him his dose overnight, and then slip in again directly the gates were opened in the morning, and take it to him soaked in lumps of sugar. Bless you, he used to crunch it up like a child, and ask for more. I sold him as a hunter scores of times (he was a hunter, too, to look at); he went as a match hoss, a lady's hack, a coach hoss, a cab hoss, a tradesman's hoss, and once he was bought by a circus. But somehow or other he didn't suit any of 'em; nobody ever kept him longer than a week. I said nobody; but there was an exception, and that man ruined "Billy."

Here my companion took a long pull at his flask, and lighting a fresh cigar, continued:

'It was at a small country fair, up in Yorkshire, where it happened. A young farmer, (a regular greenhorn, I took him for), bought "Billy" for £45. I made sure of getting the hoss back in a day or two, at any price I liked; but for once I was mistaken. I sent a man several times up to the farmer's place to hear if "Billy" was for sale; but the answer always came back: "No, he liked the hoss, and didn't want to part with him." At last, at the end of a fortnight, I could stand it no longer; so I determined to go myself and see what was happening. I met the young chap just outside his gate, and I said, "Good

morning, sir. How do you like the bay?" "Oh," he said; "it's you, is it, you sw— (no, I won't tell you what he called me). Got tired of sending your touts up here, have you? Come yourself at last. Well, I've been wanting to see you." And with this he took off his coat, and began to tuck up his sleeves. "Oh, that's your game, is it?" I said, following his example; for I rather liked a bit of a scrap in those days. "Come on!" At it we went; but, bless your life, sir, I hadn't a chance with the chap, he hammered me till I could hardly see. And then, when I halloed out, "Enough!" he gave me a couple more for luck, and, after quietly putting on his coat, he turned into his gate. "Hold on," I shouted. "I've come to buy that bay hoss." "You needn't tell me that," he replied; "I know well enough what you came here for. Expect it won't be the first time by a good many that you've wanted to buy him. Eh? Well, look here; if you want him, his price is ninety." "What? shillings?" I said. "No! ninety pounds, and no less," he answered. Now, sir, that on the top of the licking I'd got was a bit too hard, wasn't it? Well, sir, I bid him thirty, forty, fifty; but it was no use, he only laughed at me. And at last I said I'd give him his price, if the horse ran out sound; for you see I had to have him back. It was my living, and if I'd had to leave the coat on my back, I'd have done it rather than lose "Billy." "Oh, he's sound enough," said the farmer. And the hoss was brought out, and trotted up and down the road. He was all right, and looked healthy and well; so I counted out the money in notes and gold, and handed it over. It was a big price to give for him; but I felt certain he'd soon pay it back again, though he was then ten years old, and not so fresh on his legs as he had been once; for though he had never done any work, yet he'd had a lot of travelling. I wished the farmer good morning (he never even asked me to have a glass of beer), and took hold of the halter to lead "Billy" away. "Aren't you going to ride him?" asked his late owner. "Not if I know it," I answered, with a wink. "I prefer walking." "Oh, but he's a lovely hack; I often rode him bareback. Look here!" He took the halter out of my hand, got a leg up from the groom, who stood there grinning, and to my astonishment rode "Billy" down the road without the slightest trouble. The hoss didn't look as if he'd been faked, and when he came back I smelt his breath and turned up his eyelids, but could find nothing suspicious. "What do you give him?" I asked, after the man had got off. "Oh, I don't know;

better ask my groom here. Oats, beans and hay, I imagine. *What did you give him?* Well, sir, I was staggered. Then I noticed a mark on his shoulder. "Not had him in harness, have you?" I asked, as quietly as I could. "Oh, yes! why not? He's a capital trapper, but hardly keen enough for me." "Go on," I said; "who are you getting at?" I was quite disgusted with the chap's talk, and I led "Billy" away without saying another word. I could hear 'em laughing behind me as I walked away; but I didn't care, I'd got my hoss back. Of course, I still thought he'd been dosed; and though he came rather expensive, in more ways than one, I felt certain I'd soon have my money back all right, and I began to settle in my mind where the next plant was to be. I stabled him at a country inn that night; and next morning I went in, expecting to find him his old self again. But, would you believe it, sir, that hoss neighed when I opened the door, and rubbed his nose on my coat. What do you think of that for cheek, after the money I'd paid for him? I thought, maybe, it might be because he knew me so well, though, as far as I could remember, he'd never been glad to see me before. So I told a stable boy to go in to him with a feed of corn. "Billy" took no notice of him. "Now, take it away from him," I said. The boy looked surprised, and scraped it all out, and the horse did nothing except root at the boy's hand with his nose. I was more staggered than ever. Then I put a saddle and bridle on him, and got on his back. Blessed if he wasn't as quiet as a sheep. Next I borrowed a trap, and put him in. Nothing could go better or quieter. I can tell you, sir, I was sick, disgusted. "Billy" cured; I couldn't believe it. I got him home, and every day looked and hoped for a change; but it never came. HE WAS CURED. "Billy" had turned out the quietest hoss in the world, and nothing would make him go wrong. I felt I could murder that rascally farmer, who had swindled me so. You may be sure I got rid of the brute the first chance I met with, I hated to see him. If I remember right, I got about £30 for him; he went to carry a whip somewhere. From that day, till I saw him at Leicester to-day, I've never seen or heard anything of him. I've often wondered how that chap mastered him; expect he Rarefied him, or used that tip of tying their heads to their tails, or something. Anyhow he cured him. At the time, I thought I was ruined; but I'd saved a bit of money, so I took a yard in Nottingham, and since then I've been on the straight, and not done badly at it either. But

"Billy" was a plant. Eh? Ah! Here I am at Nottingham,' he said, as the train began to slow up. 'Well, sir, look me up if you can't find a nag. I've got 'em all sorts and all prices. Oh, you bought one to-day. What, that bay in the twelve stall stable, two from the end? Ah, now I remember, he *was* knocked down to you. I thought his little history might amuse you. Good night. Good night.'

THE PAST RACING SEASON.

By 'TIM WHIFFLER.'

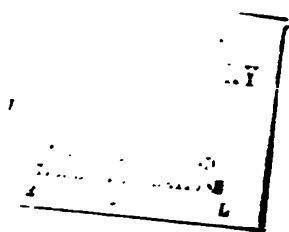
THE gallant victory of La Flèche in the Cambridge-shire was a happy wind up to what may, without exaggeration, be termed a most sensational year's racing. From hardly one of the important races, indeed, has the dramatic element been wanting.

To begin with, there was the alleged poisoning of Orme, the winter favourite for the Two Thousand Guineas and Derby; his enforced elimination from those races, and his resuscitation just in time to win the Eclipse Stakes at Sandown. How the sensation-mongers gloated over the letters of Orme's noble owner in the newspapers, and what evil stories did they not conjure up in their minds! How they pictured to themselves Mr. George Lewis, grey kid gloves and all, cross-examining all the Kings-clere stable *employés*, one after the other; and what would they not have given to be there! After Orme's case, never again will the sporting novelist, with his glowing account of how the favourite was nobbled in his box, be laughed at by his readers—at least he ought not to be. Joking apart, there is no doubt that Orme's victory at Sandown came as a positive relief to this horse-loving nation of ours. The cheering that went up from the crowd as the gallant bay returned to weigh in after the race, was sufficient proof if any was wanting. We never, indeed, remember a greater outburst of enthusiasm on a racecourse, unless it was when Ormonde beat Minting for the Hardwicke States at Ascot, in 1887.

Then, again, the Derby itself was a genuine old-fashioned turn up, for it is very certain few of the sporting or general public fancied Sir Hugo, as, indeed, how could they? It was



"I never saw two men
in such a hurry to get out of a stable."



an extraordinary race altogether, and certainly not a satisfactory one.

After Orme's victory in the Eclipse Stakes, of course the St. Leger was booked as a good thing for him. His admirers declared him to be a real 'smasher,' and backed him accordingly. Then came his severe race with his stable companion, Watercress, in the Sussex Stakes, at Goodwood ; the Duke of Westminster's horse, on whom odds of 5 to 1 were laid, only just winning by a head. This narrow squeak somewhat damped the ardour of his St. Leger supporters, but only for a while. All manner of excuses were made for him ; the money was once more piled on him, and he eventually started a warm favourite for the famous 'Sellinger,' for which he was not even placed.

The jockey of a defeated favourite, in nine cases out of ten, has to run the gauntlet of a host of uncharitable remarks, and George Barrett was no exception to the rule. Seeing, however, that since that event the jockey in question has had the mounts on all the best horses in the stable, he can very well afford to maintain a dignified silence.

Many good judges held aloof from Orme for the Leger, giving as their reason, the very simple one, that it had never yet been proved that the horse was a stayer. And the result of the race proved how right they were, for at the end of a mile, the favourite—who up to that distance had gone as well, if not better than anything—had come to the end of his tether, and, to the dismay of his backers, was seen to be in hopeless difficulties. There would have been a great rejoicing had the Duke's horse won, for he was essentially a public idol. As it could not be, however, the victory of La Flèche was the next best thing that could have happened. It was a gallant victory, that of Baron Hirsch's now famous mare, and she might well start at the short price she did for the Lancashire Plate. Opinions differ as to what would have happened had the unlucky St. Angelo not tumbled head-over-heels in the mud on that occasion. The majority, however, we fancy, are in favour of the mare being the better horse, and we are with them.

Does not the victory of the despised Rusticus, in the Leicestershire Handicap come, too, under the head of a sensational victory ? We fancy it does. It was another instance of a horse running well over his favourite course. It was a pity, all things considered, that there was nothing in the stable to tell his owner the time of day. As it was, the victory was a popular one, for

Mr. Hamar Bass has spent a fortune on the turf, and with the exception of the dual victory of Rusticus, at Leicester, has, up to the present, got nothing to show for it. Here's wishing him better luck in the future.

How about Miss Dollar's victory, too, in the Duke of York Stakes? There was a decided dash of sensation about that, we fancy, and rather an unpleasant sensation as well. Here was a mare who had been backed by her owner and the public, time after time, for important races, in which she runs nowhere. Now, unbacked for a penny, and so little fancied by her trainer that he did not even journey to Kempton to see her run, she comes out and wins in a canter. Miss Dollar was evidently quite determined to keep up the glorious uncertainty of the Turf, so far as lay in her power.

The backing of Burnaby at the last moment for the Cesarewitch provided the sensational element of the race. The students of public form pounced on him as a "good thing" the moment they saw the weights, and it was the covering money of the continental bookies that landed Mr. Hobson's horse favourite directly the numbers went up. Small punters who invested a trifle on Burnaby at starting price, and hugged themselves when they heard he had won, at the thought that they had landed a 20 to 1 chance—possibly more, certainly not less—could scarcely believe their eyes when, later on, they read in the 'special' that the horse's starting price was 7 to 1.

The much-talked-of match between Bucaneer and Nunthorpe came off after all, thanks to the liberality of the Portsmouth Park Race Committee. Had Nunthorpe been training it might have been an interesting affair; as it was Bucaneer had it all his own way, the finish resembling that of a steeplechase more than a race on the flat.

And now to finish the season—the season proper at least—La Flèche comes out and wins the Cambridgeshire in a canter. That it was a tremendously popular victory goes without saying; and deservedly so, for if ever a man followed the Sport of Kings in princely fashion, surely Baron Hirsch is that man. Owner, trainer, and jockey—not forgetting Lord Marcus Beresford—are to be congratulated most heartily on the result; whilst, as for La Flèche herself, she goes into winter quarters with her name enrolled amongst the famous race-horses of the century.

THE RECLUSE OF THE ONDAWA.

By J. HARRINGTON KEENE.



Y the side of the giant form of Mount Equinox, the highest mountain of the Teconic range (Vermont), with many a cascade breaking its flow into a thousand streams of molten silver, and anon peacefully gliding between banks clothed in the last luxuriance of summer, singing a murmurous song of peace and serenity, flows the trout stream that I love—Ondawa.

'The high and massy mountains roll along
Wave-like, beside thee, dressed in living green,
Whilst giant Equinox, a parent strong,
Of myriad rivulets, with royal mien,
Head-gray in cloud, o'ershades the lædal scene.

Through dells and grots, through festooned, dreaming woods,
Thou boundest, glad of heart in child-like glee.
'Mid plains of emerald or solitude,
Dark with the crag, or from the canopy
Of leafy mystery, thou flee'st, wild and free.

And from thy limpid deeps or riffles whirl,
Or the translucent eddy's oily curl,
Leaps the bejewelled trout. Thus richer far
Than Ophir's mines of gold, art thou, oh Ondawa !'

Such is the sweet little mountain stream of which I am writing, and let it be added that the 'bejewelled' trout are above the average in size of mountain fish. Here, though no part of the stream is much less than five hundred feet above the level of the sea, very few trout are taken less than one-fourth of a pound, and sometimes they reach two pounds ; yea, tradition tells of a three-pound fish, killed years ago by the so-called 'Hermit of the Ondawa.'

Get off the rail at the little village of Arlington, in Bennington County, and make your way down to the stream. You will instantly distinguish it by the luxuriance of foliage fringing its banks. Pass on a few hundreds of yards down stream, and before you are aware of it a tiny white wooden cottage flashes out of the surrounding greenery, and as instantly the bright

hues of a rainbow-coloured garden, small also, like the cottage, assail your unaccustomed sight. The sleek-coated, soft-eyed cow grazes lazily in the afternoon sun on the greenest of herbage in the tiny paddock, and the tall hollyhocks and yellow mangolds and nasturtiums, massed round the doorway, only just allow you to see glimpses through the half-open door of snowy linen on the table, and the glass and silver set, as is the custom in these New England homes, ready for the next meal. Yet people will tell you that only one lonely woman lives there; she holds no intercourse with the busy world, except to barter her small produce at the nearest town; no children make her homestead merry with their prattle, nor neighbours with their scandal. Jane Pettibone lives there by preference, alone, and has so done for close on a quarter of a century, asking no favour and receiving none. Some say she is a little weak in her intellect, but be that as it may, she catches the best of the trout hereabouts, and these, day after day during summer, are sent on to the Equinox Hotel for the wealthy summer guests, at a sufficient price to materially aid the lone woman to provide for the hard, and to the poor, the terrible, long New England winter.

For the 'Hermit' is an expert fly-fisherwoman. Why not? The sweet summer stream sings its song very pleasantly all day in the sunshine, and at night murmurs a lullaby in the ears of the lonely woman that speaks of rest. At flood time, after one of the sudden storms which break over the towering heights, piled tier on tier around, the river rushes mightily over its boulder-strewn bed, and there is neither in storm nor calm, winter nor summer, no part of its varying course unknown to her. All her spare time is spent in fishing. She has made, and makes, her own tackle, and occasionally the accidental, strange fisherman finds that her flies are the only ones with which he can fill his basket, and so gratefully leaves *largesse*, in the shape of a dollar or two, with this quiet, silent, grey-haired little woman, who murmurs a word of thanks, and escapes all questions with instant celerity.

It is a bright and beautiful afternoon as you stroll, rod in hand, down stream. Presently, as the cottage disappears amid its thick, umbrageous surroundings from your sight, you are aware that a small figure is ahead of you, whipping the stream with rythmical impulses of the rod, and in a moment you recognise the figure. She is wading—actually—and in men's

clothes too, but you know it to be a woman from the long hair, and the faded, but neat, hat, trimmed with fluttering ribbons. As she perceives you she makes to the bank and disappears. You linger in the hope of again seeing her, but in vain, and you go on your way fishing and wondering at the odd sight here in this country, where women have such larger legal rights, and are so much more self-reliant than in the old world.

The story of the event which has thus turned the current of her life—for she lives to-day as I describe her, not a mile from where I write, and it is not half-an-hour since I myself saw her fishing—I say the event that turned her to this quiet, uneventful, waiting life, was, needless to say, a great shock and a sorrow. There are those hereabouts who know all about her history, and from one of the least imaginative I learned it word for word, as I now set it down.

Jane Pettibone—it is her maiden name, for she has never been married, was born and lived till womanhood in this same little old cottage, with her father and mother, good, worthy folk, who derived their living long before the neighbouring village sprang into being, from the stream and their little patch of land. Jane was their only child, and grew in beauty and a fresh, wild kind of innocence which one only sees in the children of parents living in the beautiful solitudes of the earth, and rarely enough then. By-and-bye, when she was in her fifteenth year, there came a vagabond Englishman of high birth who fished and painted in the lovely valley, seemingly enchanted with its sylvan loveliness, and, need I say, he fell in love with Jane. The sequel was the old, old one. The fresh innocence of this modern Lurline conquered whatever good impulse he might have had, and *dolce far niente* did the rest. One day she was missing, and he was seen no more. All efforts to hear of her were unavailing, and the old man and woman mourned in their simple, Puritanic pride for 'a confusion worse than death'; ultimately the mother died, calling yet on the name of her lost one. And all this happened in a short few months.

One night, as the autumn frosts and winds were dismally chilling and whirling the bright-coloured leaves of the maple and elm from their branches, and as the old man, not yet having lit the lamp, was sitting desolately before the stove, there came a light tap at the door. He opened it, and in came the lost sheep of the fold, well dressed enough, but with a look of anguish in her eyes that caused the stern Puritan spirit of the man to melt

with infinite pity and forgiveness. No one knew what passed between them, but doubtless it was the same vulgar tale of love, betrayal, and desertion. At any rate, before long a baby was born, and in bearing it the mother became insane.

This cloud over her intellect, however, seemed, after a time, to be lifted, but though her father said nothing, it was plain that the disgrace and the loss of his wife had broken his spirit. Very rapidly his health declined, and surely and silently farmer Pettibone neared the dark river, and finally died.

It is impossible to tell how much sorrow humanity can bear without the blessed relief which death brings. Jane Pettibone became again insane after the burial of her father. On the day of the funeral, the few neighbours who had showed good feeling enough to follow, noticed her distraught manner, but, with the indifference of ignorance, let her return to the empty dwelling without company. The next morning a farmer's lad, passing over a bridge spanning the river, five miles lower down, espied the body of a baby floating. It turned out to be Jane Pettibone's child, and when they went to her they found a raving lunatic, crouching in a corner, drenched to the skin. For three years she was wholly insane, and as the fourth burst into spring she as suddenly recovered, under the careful nursing extended by some rich and charitable people who interested themselves in the case. This is all the very commonplace story, but it is sufficiently tragic to render the ignorant country people reticent concerning her, and unsociable; so she lives and has lived on alone, finding her chief solace in fishing in summer, and in making flies and other tackle during the long winter for a local tackle-seller.

And one would be astonished at the beautiful work she turns out. She has a valuable collection of water insects, and the flies of which they are the *larvæ*. Her productions go from Portland on the Atlantic, to Portland on the West Pacific Ocean, right over this great continent, and from Florida Gulf on the south to Manitoba on the north. Yet nobody knows that the flies are not those of the ostensible maker. Such is, however, the case as I have stated it, and such is the story, told for the first time, of the Recluse of the Ondawa.

'GUBBINS' RUN.'

By MAURICE NOEL

THE leaves in the autumn were turning to brown,
 And the winds of October were sweeping them down,
 As a sportsman, whose whiskers were turning to grey,
 To Alderley Coppice was making his way.

He wasn't an amiable man at the best,
 And his liver went wrong with the wind in the west;
 But whenever the weathercock pointed to east,
 His enemies vowed he was simply a 'beast.'

But in spite of the faults he undoubtedly had,
 It cannot be said he was totally bad;
 For linked with his crimes was a virtue—in short,
 He subscribed to the hounds, and he patronised sport.

But though his subscription was paid, as we say,
 He did not behave in a liberal way;
 And the huntsman, and whips, and the earthstopper, Sam,
 Agreed in declaring him 'not worth a ——!'

Well, Timothy Gubbins—for that was his name—
 Went steadily forward, and presently came
 To Alderly Coppice, and ere very long
 The hounds and the huntsman came jogging along.

It need hardly be said they had come out a-cubbing,
 To bustle the foxes, and give them a drubbing;
 To enter the puppies, and teach them with care,
 It isn't good manners to 'speak to' a hare.

The field, when the huntsman proceeded to draw,
 Consisted of Gubbins, and one or two more;
 So large were the coverts, so close was the day,
 There was hardly a chance of their 'getting away.'

The minutes went by, and they hadn't yet found,
 There was nothing to see, and there wasn't a sound
 Except, through the greenwood at intervals borne,
 The voice of the huntsman, the twang of his horn.

The earthstopper, Sam, who was watching them draw,
 Was pausing, and mopping his head, when he saw,
 Through the leaves of the bush he was standing beside,
 Old Gubbins alone, at the end of a ride.

'The stingy ole wagabone!' Sam muttered low
(He wasn't admired by Sam, as we know);
'I wonder the blanky old mare doesn't kick,
'Twould sarve him well right if she played him a trick:

Now just at this moment, he happened to see
By the edge of the ride, at the foot of a tree,
No more and no less than a hole in the ground
Which a few little insects were buzzing around.

Then Sam gave a chuckle, and said with a grin—
'Wy, Sammy, what wonderful luck you be in!
If Gubbins will come along here as he ought,
I'll wager a gallon I show him some sport!'

He hardly had spoken, it chanced to betide,
When Gubbins came slowly along through the ride;
And Sammy—he stirred up the hole with a stick,
And safely crept off where the bushes were thick.

The wasps from their fortress in fury turned out,
They whizzed, and they buzzed, and they darted about,
They were ready to 'go for' the first living thing,
They had only one object, and that was to sting!

A couple of hounds now appeared on the scene,
They only were puppies, and not very keen,
They thought they'd been taken to play in the copses,
And one, as he passed them, took note of the wopses.

Like a blundering puppy, he turned him again,
And snuffed at the hole, but he did not remain!
A snap and a yelp, and he flew down the ride,
For help and protection to Gubbins' side.

The other one followed his friend nothing loth,
For the furious insects were after them both;
And Gubbins, who wondered, at first, what was wrong,
Was *not* left in doubt or in wonder for long.

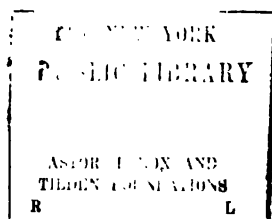
For the smart little cusses were thick in the air,
They stung him all over and stuck in his hair,
He beat all about him, and yelled with the pain,
He swore, and they stung him again and again!

But well as they gave it to Gubbins, his mare
From a host of attendants was getting her share;
She tucked in her tail, but could hardly make out
Whatever the bothering flies were about.



Jacky Mares

"The Mare bolted madly away like the wind."



But the stings were implanted so fast and so thick,
They forced her to plunge, and to buck, and to kick;
And Gubbins, her antics unable to check,
Lost one of his stirrups, and clung to her neck.

The mare bolted madly away like the wind,
The wasps and the puppies they followed behind;
And Sam, in the bush where he'd managed to hide,
Rolled over and over, and laughed till he cried.

Poor Gubbins, who'd lost all control of his mare,
Near the top of the wood—to his utter despair—
Perceived, by her ears, and her quickening stride,
She was bound for the fence at the end of the ride.

He shouted, 'Whoa! Whoa!' and he tugged at the rein,
He struggled to stop her, or turn her in vain,
For he knew very well that exactly beyond
The fence was located a nice little pond.

A rise at the bullfinch! a rush through the air!
A splash, that succeeded a yell of despair!
A silence, and Gubbins emerged on the bank,
His billy-cock marking the spot where he sank.

And soon—for the bottom sloped gently to shore—
The quieted mare was in safety once more;
And Gubbins rode slowly and sadly away,
And did not go 'cubbing' for many a day.

The field were delighted, of course, with the fun,
And frequently talk over 'Gubbins' run;'
And Sam, when he found himself able to speak,
Told the huntsman, and both of them laughed for a week.

ETON *v.* HARROW.

A REPLY TO AN 'OLD DRY BOB' *by* 'A YOUNG DRY BOB.'

(To the Proprietor of 'Fores' Sporting Notes and Sketches.)



IR,—The article in the last number of your magazine entitled 'Eton *v.* Harrow,' and signed 'An Old Dry Bob,' has interested—not to say excited—a good many Etonians, and probably Harrovians also, to a very considerable extent. We are all quite ready to admit that your

correspondent, in one or two instances, knows what he is talking—or rather writing about, as, for instance, the superiority, from a picturesque point of view, of our cricket-ground over that of our rivals at Harrow. He might, indeed, fill your entire magazine in expatiating on the unparalleled beauties of the ‘shooting fields,’ and *then* not say sufficient to do it justice.

No, sir; where we present Etonians desire to ‘pick a bone’ with him is, in proposing that the ‘Harrow match,’ as we call it here, should be played alternately on one or other of the school grounds, instead of at Lord’s. He says that the fond parents of the boys would like the arrangement, the masters certainly would not object, and he does not see why the boys themselves should, either.

Doesn’t he, really?

Let me tell him, sir, in the name of Etonians generally, that they *DO* object—with an accent on the ‘*DO*,’ as that funny comedian Arthur Roberts would say—most decidedly.

We are all, of course, extremely glad to see our dear relations—our brothers and sisters, our cousins and our aunts—down here on the 4th of June, or, indeed, any day they choose during the ‘half,’ and are only too delighted on such occasions to show them over our venerable school, with its classic surroundings, such as the swishing room, with its block on which so many great and good men—including, I regret to say, your correspondent—have at times knelt in expiation of their offences (oh, the agony of it on a frosty morning!), the beautiful chapel, long chamber, Webber’s, &c., accompanying them afterwards to the ‘White Hart’ or the ‘Castle,’ where they show their gratitude by feasting you on ducks and green peas and claret cup, with, perhaps, a tip in the shape of a fiver ‘thrown in’ before taking their departure. This, I repeat, is all very nice, and as it should be; but when it comes to our relations coming to see *us* for the Eton and Harrow match, instead of our going to see *them*, that is altogether another pair of boots.

Does ‘An Old Dry Bob’ really suppose that the cricket itself is the only attraction on this occasion?—to us boys, I mean. Because, if so, let me tell him he makes a very great mistake. Putting the attraction of the match itself on one side, does he suppose that a visit to London (leave, of course, having been given by the Head Master), extending from Friday till Monday, with its attendant visits to the theatres, dinners at one or other

of the clubs with some festive Old Boys, &c., counts for nothing in the estimation of the Etonian or Harrovian?

(My uncle, the Major, put me up for the last Harrow match at his rooms in the 'Albany,' and what a time I—or rather I should say we, for my uncle is just like a schoolboy himself—had of it to be sure! One perpetual 'lark' it was from beginning to end.)

Again, 'An Old Dry Bob' goes on to compare unfavourably the high feeding that now goes on at Lord's during the great public school match—a gigantic picnic he calls it—with the more modest fare that the onlookers were content with in his day. There again, do I, in common with my fellows, disagree with him. Shandygaff is all very well, but champagne is a good deal better. The former we can drink to our hearts' content any day in the week; the latter we *don't* see much of, as may be imagined.

Granted 'my tutor' would give us a capital luncheon, the same as he does on the 4th of June, were the match to take place on the school-ground; but, thank 'An Old Dry Bob,' all the same, I prefer to take mine on the top of a coach in company with pretty girls and good fellows, and all the good things of this world spread out in tempting array, with cooling drinks to match and a cigarette to follow. (My tutor saw me lighting one during this very last match, and merely 'winked the other eye' as he passed on, like the good fellow he is. Had it been at Eton, he would have 'complained' of me to a certainty, and I should have been 'put in the bill.'

No, sir, with all due respect to 'An Old Dry Bob,' the present arrangements for Eton v. Harrow are quite good enough for myself and friends; and that things may continue as they are—at all events, so long as I am a public schoolboy—is my fervent desire, as well as that of my schoolfellows. When I become a 'paterfamilias' myself, then possibly I may change my opinions.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

'A YOUNG DRY BOB.'

Eton College, Bucks, September, 1892.

AN IRISH RACE MEETING.

By F. S. V. HAYNES.

IT is now some years since fortune and the War Office sent me with a couple of companies of my regiment to a town in Ireland, from whence we were to go forth, when required, to aid in evictions and such other little pleasantries (?) as were taking place at the time. We did not like the work, and I think the people knew it, for, whilst bestowing their choicest blessings and biggest stones on the bailiffs and police, they never raised voice or hand against the men clothed in 'England's cruel red.' Our detachment was dull, very dull, and being on the Bog of Allen there was neither scenery to admire, people to visit, or anything to shoot. Nearly every one had gone away in terror of their tenants, and the two or three families left, drove about on their outside cars, with policemen and loaded rifles as their companions. Only one offer of sport did I and my subalterns receive, and that was from a gentleman who had retired to the comparative safety of 'dear dirty Dublin,' from whence he sent me the following note of invitation :—

'Dear CAPTAIN H—,

'I know you like fishing, so go and have as many days of it as you will at my place, Clonra, for the trout swarm there. Take a revolver, too, for it's likely the boys * will think you are looking about too much, and if so you'll have a bit of shooting as well as the fishing I'm pleased to offer you.

Yours truly, G. DENNIS.'

Allured by the stimulating prospect of being probably made game of, we proceeded to Clonra, but, except half-a-dozen minnows in a species of backwater, not a fish could we see or attract. Probably the 'boys' were accountable for this, as well as for the disappearance of every head of game on the estate. However, they did not apparently consider us to be 'an excellent substitute' for the said game, so we returned as we went, bar being cold and cross. In this state of dulness it was with delight one morning that we found the town liberally be-plastered with brightest green placards, announcing that the Killaclon Steeple-chases and Races would take place on a certain date, then a

* Every man under fifty is a boy, in Ireland, let me explain.

week distant, a statement which was followed by a special programme sent to us at the barracks.

The Killaclon Meeting seemed to have existed for some years, and was conducted on illegitimate lines, of course with no G. N. H. (or any other) rules about it. There were no hounds within thirty miles at least, so horses were not much needed, and ponies usually formed the feature of the meeting. The 'event' of the day was evidently a race described on the programme as follows:—

THE BALLYBLACKISE CUP.

For mares and all other horses, which have never drawn a load of hay or policemen. Owners must be up. No owner to start more than three mares of his own.

Despite the warnings of the Resident Magistrate that it was a people's meeting, and they might turn on us, &c., we sallied forth on the day appointed, well mounted, and with good hunting whips in our hands, warranted to be able to tell a tale on any head they touched, should a bit of a 'ruction' take place. Our ride was along a road upon which all the 'boys' of the countryside, together with their womenkind, were progressing, the latter sometimes on foot, but more often on cars, carts, or sitting serenely sideways on a long-suffering donkey; costumes varied from the colleen, with bare feet and head, bright petticoat, and neatly pinned little shawl, or the 'decent woman' of some sixty winters, in her long black cloak and black bonnet surmounting a huge white cap, to the 'gintale' farmers' daughters, resplendent in hats with feathers or flowers a mile high, and sitting on a car drawn by an anatomical study in horses. As we neared the scene of action the crowd of cars and of people grew thicker and thicker, and ejaculations in Irish, with a free translation into English blessings (?) became fast and furious, besides suchlike appeals to the chivalry of the drivers of divers cars, as 'Will ye take ye're shafts out of mee petticoats and mee chacket of whiskey, now'—'May the divil fly away wid ye, Tim Doyle, but that baste of yours is atin' the flowers off of mee new hat,' and so on.

The entrance to the race ground was by an old gate, hingeless, of course, but tied on both sides to stone pillars, and upon this sat the gatekeeper and a friend, each with enormous bags for coin in their hands, and each evidently watching the other in no very trustful mood. 'Two an' six each, yer honours,

but nothing for the lady, bless her,' was the response to my query of 'How much.' This sum was evidently too much for the feelings and pockets of two 'squireens' who were following us, so they jumped the low wall, followed by a volley of clods and adjurations from the gatekeepers and a few foot passengers. No flags could I see to mark either fences or course, but a long car was placed about in the middle of the field, and a species of hop-pole, with a green rag on top of it, was by its side. This, I was informed by a cheery-looking farmer, with a green rosette on his breast as big as a cabbage, was the Grand Stand and winning post. 'And sure I'm the Stewards and the Judge. Ma'am dear (to my wife), will ye come now and sit on the car with himself and his friends.'

We accepted the offer, but asked first to be allowed to ride round the course and look at the fences. 'Thim's the fences,' said our green-rosetted friend, pointing out three little walls and a grassy bank, with pride.

'But they surely are very small and it isn't a quarter of a mile round them and back here,' said I.

'Ah, now! Captin', shure they go round and round till they've done two miles, and, bedad, minny of the riders fall off long before that, what with the little dhrop of whiskey before startin', and the fences comin' so quick, and the goin' round, and shure *they're* big enough for his reverence's horse, and ye wouldn't like to see Father Phil lose?'

At this period we were interrupted by a gentleman in blue stockings, cord breeches (I think they had been cords, but am not sure which of the many and diversified patches may have been the original garment), and a coat which would have done well for a scarecrow. 'Ah now, Captin,' dear, d'you remember evicting me last week? Will ye ride mee little harse for me in the More's Cup, and ye'll win it.'

I explained that my fourteen stone riding-weight would, or should, prevent me from having that pleasure, but all to no purpose.

'Phwat do the weights matter, Captin', we none of us weigh,' was the response.

So I told him to bring up the 'little harse' just before the Ballyblackise Cup, and then inquired of Father Phil, who had by this time taken his seat also on the grand stand car, as to the whereabouts of the flat racecourse.

'Jis' there,' said he, pointing to a long field severely up hill,

‘they go up and down that till they make their half mile, or whatever the distance be, and then take a turn round and come past us to win.’

‘But isn’t it a flat race?’ said I.

‘Shurely it is, and a beautiful course for it, too, divil a bit (the Lord forgive me for the word!) of anything but up an’ down hill the whole way.’

At length a bell rang to tell us that the first race was going to begin, and some ten rough ponies and galloways were taken out of the shafts of their cars, mounted by their erstwhile drivers, and ridden down to the post. There they very literally ‘came under the starter’s orders,’ for he dragged some into line, vituperated viciously some daring spirits who were trying to edge forwards, and finally said ‘One, two, three, and away.’ Yells from riders and owners followed this novel style of despatch, and a shower of blows from interested spectators on the quarters of the luckless ponies. The race, which began at a gallop of sorts, speedily came down to a trot, and was won in a (literal) walk, a bad second, and the rest nowhere, and row enough from the crowd to have greeted a Derby win. The winning ‘Jock,’ by the way, was very drunk in fifteen minutes, thanks to the appreciation by his friends of his riding.

Then came one or two more little races, much after the same fashion, followed by the steeplechase in which Father Phil’s hunter was to figure. A goodlooking brown horse cantered past with a youthful rider up in a very clean white shirt. ‘Andy, mee boy,’ roared the good Father, ‘don’t be after fallin’ and dirtyin’ yer shirt; to-morrow’s Sunday, and ye’ve to be at Mass at 7, ye mind *me*!’ Three more horses contested the chase with that of Father Phil, but, alas that I should say it, the little brown horse fell at the only wall where there was a muddy landing, and he and Andy rolled gaily in the dirt together, whilst the good Father’s face assumed an expression which boded ill for his jockey’s comfort on the morrow. Meantime the other horses were making a good struggle for a win, two being pretty well neck and neck, but this was too much for the feelings of one of the gentleman riders, so he promptly caught hold of his opponent’s bridle with one hand, and gave him a slash of his whip with the other, upon which attack both jocks dropped their bridles and began a species of wrestling on horseback, during which performance number three crept in a quiet winner, with Father Phil’s second.

My race came next and last, and a ragged-hipped, game-looking, rough beast was led up, which plainly showed that he only needed to make the acquaintance of oats and hay to be a good horse enough. Being a mare's race it is unnecessary to say that the animal did not belong to that sex, but as no one raised an objection, *I* was not going to begin such. I changed a bridle and saddle, which seemed to be composed chiefly of rope, string, and carpet, for my own, and with a blessing from Father Phil, and a laugh from my wife and my cheeky subalterns (they had seen my last appearance on a course as first out, and first in, at a big meeting in England), I proceeded to the start. There we were delayed, as a spectator objected to my mount running, on the ground that he had helped to draw the police to the very eviction of which his owner was the hero. A small but exceedingly free fight at once took place, quelled at last by the ubiquitous Father Phil, who stated that all the horses (?) then to be started for the More's Cup, had been impressed on police service the previous week, and therefore all were disqualified. 'But nivir mind, bhoys, shure ye can have your race all the same,' said he.

Nothing loth, we started, and a weary race it was up and down that hill. My horse was the best, however, and as I was easing his pace a bit up one turn, his owner rushed out from some gorse and said: 'Captin' he's yours for tin pounds, say yis, say yis!'

'All right,' said I, and went on and won.

No sooner had I dismounted and handed over my steed to his owner's little 'gossoon of a bhoys' to hold, than yells broke out wildly in the nearest whiskey booth, it having just occurred to the man who ran second that I was *not* the owner of the winner, and 'owners up' was a condition not to be avoided. Now I understood my wily friend's sudden sale of the horse to me at such an attractive price, and nothing could exceed the innocent sadness of expression as he explained to all and sundry how 'the good Captin' had given him tin pounds for the little harse, because he hadn't a pig left on the place.'

All's well that ends well, and the explanation was accepted, but had I drank all the whiskey that was offered to me as the rider and winner of *the* race of the day, I don't think things would have ended well for me.

‘GENTLEMAN JACK.’

By FINCH MASON.



WHEN the train in which I found myself one cold afternoon in November drew up for a few minutes at Puzzleby Junction, and I, laying aside for the nonce the novel which I had been endeavouring to read all the morning, let down the carriage-window, the better to study the various specimens of excited humanity usually to be met with on a crowded railway platform, two figures at once attracted my special attention, and, as I gazed at them, they furnished my mind with food for reflection, not only as long as the train rested at Puzzleby Junction, but for some little time afterwards as well. The figures were those of a soldier and a gamekeeper. The former, a smart young fellow, on furlough evidently, as luck would have it, belonged to my old regiment, the —th. Yes! there was no mistaking the familiar green facings. Naturally my thoughts began to wander to the merry days I had spent in various places with the dear old corps. What fun Ned Lovel and I used to have to be sure! Poor old Ned! I would give a trifle, thought I, to know what has become of him. I shall never forget the look of consternation that came over the face of every man in the regiment, from the Colonel to the smallest drummer-boy, when it was given out, one fine day, that Ned, our show man, the darling of the men, was about to send in his papers. He had been living on his capital, he told us, all along, and now it had come to an end, and he couldn't afford to stay with us any longer. Offers of pecuniary help came in on all sides: the Colonel, one of the best fellows in existence, implored him to think twice about the matter; even Bodger, the richest man in the regiment, voted by general consent to be one of the most selfish, unfeeling beggars in existence, was known, when bemused with sherry, to have taken him on one side after luncheon, and offered to 'get up behind,' as he called it, to any amount. 'All I ask in return, old fellow,' spluttered poor Bodger, is, that you'll p-p-promise to ride my horse for me in the Regimental Cup.' But Ned was inexorable. He was very much obliged to us all, he said; he had spent the happiest days of his life in the regiment, and it grieved him more than he could say

to have to go ; but he had quite made up his mind that go he must—so there was an end of the matter. And, remonstrances being in vain, nothing was left but to make much of him whilst he remained with us, which I need scarcely say we did, finishing up by giving him a tremendous dinner the night before he left us.

This happened just two years ago, and from that day to this I had not heard a word of poor old Ned Lovel. I was such a great friend of his (we had always, indeed, run in couples, so to speak), that I could the less understand his silence. He was always, it is true, a shocking bad hand at correspondence ; still, I certainly thought he might have made an exception in my case, and must own to sometimes feeling rather hurt. I myself left the regiment a year after he did, so that I was less likely than ever, now, to hear of my old friend's movements.

Dismissing then once more from my mind the recollections of the past, inspired by the sight of the old familiar war-paint, I next proceeded to turn over in my mind thoughts conjured up by the vision of Tommy Atkins's velveteen-clad companion. 'Now, I wonder,' said I to myself, as I lit a fresh cigar, 'I wonder what sort of a keeper my uncle has got this time.'

And here I must explain. My uncle and aunt (to whose hospitable mansion I was now journeying, as fast as an express train would take me, for the purpose of making one of the party that they annually assembled for the purpose of shooting the coverts) were, I verily believe, the most unfortunate people as regards their domestics, both male and female—but especially the former—to be found in England or out of it. Whether their easy-going ways and unsuspicious natures made them more short-sighted, and consequently more easily imposed upon than their neighbours, I can't say. I only know that the 'perfect treasures' they were perpetually hugging themselves at being the proud possessors of invariably turned out to be the most disastrous failures. There was that model housekeeper of my aunt's—'Such a treasure, my dear—came to us with *such* a character from the Bishop'—(forged, of course), who walked off six months afterwards with the best part of my aunt's best damask table linen. And that bailiff of my uncle's, too: 'A man, Sir,' he would say, 'one only comes across *once* in a lifetime ! quite my right-hand man, Sir ; what I should do without Springfield at my elbow, goodness only knows !' Springfield, if I recollect right, having robbed my too confiding relative right and left for two

years, finally bolted to Australia, having previously collected and pocketed all the rents. Butler after butler came and went : they nearly all had a gentlemanly taste for champagne and gambling ; my uncle's crest in consequence, became quite well known by the London pawnbrokers, after a bit. The very footmen, too, though strong in their whiskers and legs, were, as a rule, weak in their principles to an alarming extent ; whilst my anxiety on the present occasion, as to what sort of keeper my good uncle now possessed, was caused by the fact that on the occasion of my last visit, a year ago, for the same purpose as now, viz., shooting the pheasants, we found, on beating the coverts, that for all the good we were likely to do, we might just as well have stopped at home, seeing that they were all wholly tenantless. The keeper, of course, laid it all to the poachers, and professed not to be able to what he called 'make it off' at all ; but a week or two afterwards, after he had taken his departure, one of the underkeepers 'split' upon his late master, and told my horrified uncle that the very same fifteen hundred tame bred birds, supposed to have been transferred from the coops to the woods in September, had in reality, instead of being turned down, been driven straight off to another pheasant-breeder. No wonder the coverts were as bare as Mother Hubbard's cupboard.

'Well, Uncle John,' said I, after dinner, on the night of my arrival, when the dessert had been placed upon the table and the servants (new ones, of course) had left the room, 'and how are the pheasants this year? I hope you've had better luck with them than you had the last time I was here. What a sell it was, do you recollect?'

'Recollect! don't I!' replied my jolly uncle; 'but you need have no fear this time, my boy, for I've got *such* a keeper as never was; every one of my neighbours are jealous of my possessing such a genius, I can assure you!'

('Another of those perfect treasures, for a hundred!' I thought to myself.)

'Yes, truly!' chimed in my aunt, with enthusiasm, 'our new keeper, my dear George, is indeed a treasure; *so* good-looking, and such a nice man to talk too—quite different to the ordinary run of gamekeepers. 'Gentleman Jack,' I'm told the other servants call him, and I'm sure I don't wonder at it. I hear all the young women are in love with him; I don't wonder at *that* either,' chuckled my aunt—'and the men servants are proportionately jealous of him, and *hate* him like poison.'

'And how does this prince in disguise deport himself in return?' inquired I, highly amused.

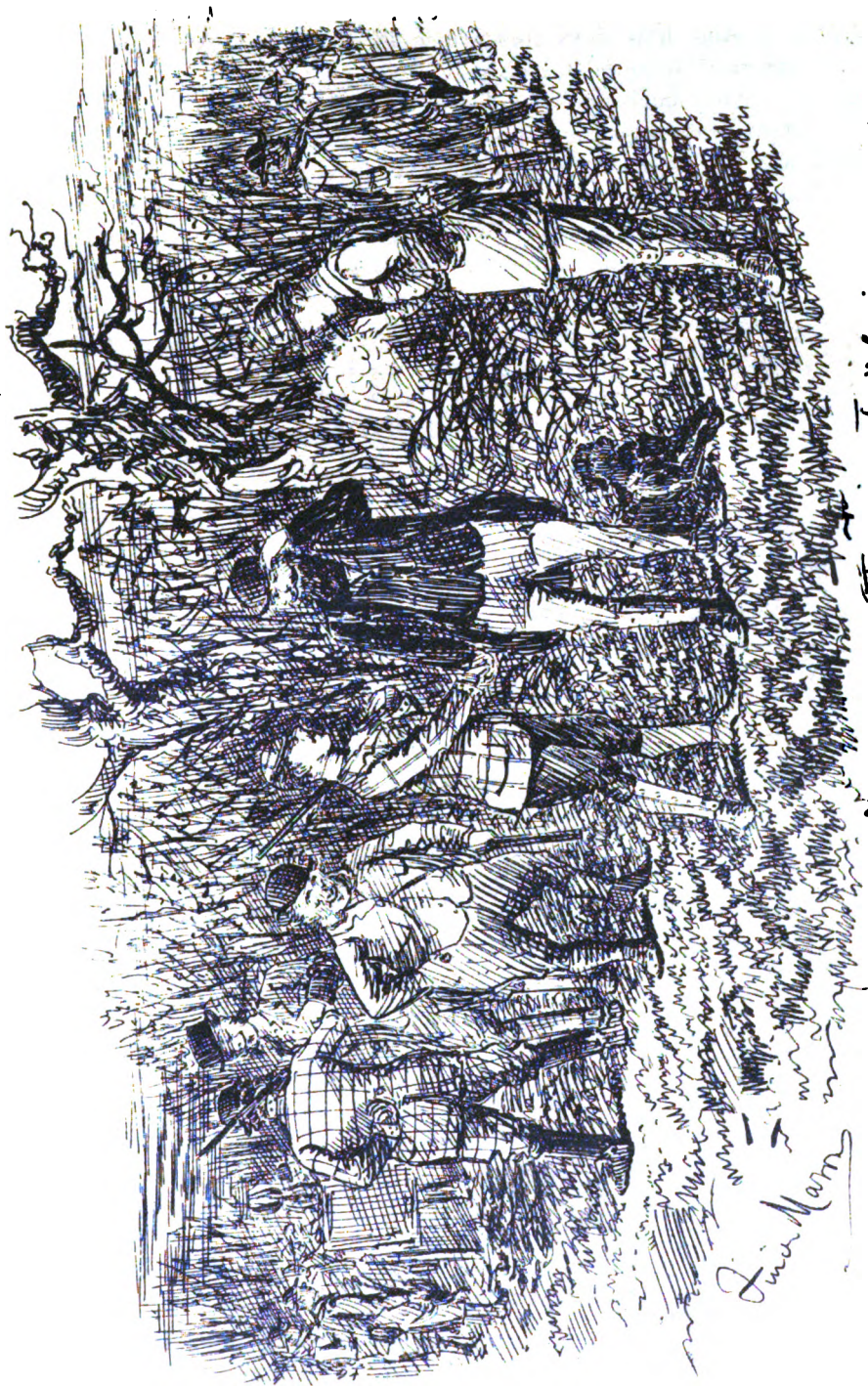
'Oh! he is most exclusive, I can assure you,' replied my aunt; 'takes not the slightest notice of the hussies, though the way they all of them make eyes at him in church is quite shocking, so my maid tells me; though I dare say, if the truth was known, my dear George,' added my aunt, looking very knowing, 'Juliana is in love with him herself, or she wouldn't have been so *very* earnest as she was about the matter.' And evidently much pleased with her own shrewdness, my aunt left us to our two selves.

'And how came you by this wonderful person?' inquired I of my uncle, as he helped himself and passed the bottle. 'I suppose he lived with some heavy swell before he came to you, eh?'

'Not a bit of it!' replied the old gentleman, with a chuckle, 'there you're altogether wrong, my boy; for this is not only his first place, but I took him absolutely without a character—without a character, Sir, of any sort or description: what do you think of that, eh?'

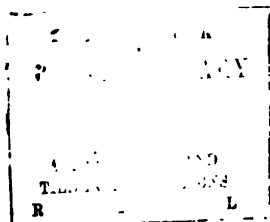
'Well! I suppose,' responded I, laughing; 'the fact is, uncle, so many of those you have had *with* characters have turned out such utter failures, that you thought this time you'd go on the opposite tack, and take one without: am I right?'

'That's it, you've guessed it!' said my uncle. 'Not, though,' continued he, 'that I meant purposely to take the first characterless person that offered his services; but when this young man turned up here one fine morning in August last, just when I was most in want of a head-keeper (for I had just discharged one), having heard, he said, from the gunsmith at Appleton, that I was in want of such an article, I was so taken by his manner and appearance (such a strapping fellow, George!), that I engaged him, taking his bare word—rather a rash proceeding, I must own—for his respectability. I have never had occasion to regret my choice, thank goodness! and I really believe, as your aunt says, that I have got hold, at last, of a veritable treasure. The first thing that happened of importance after his arrival was early in September, a meeting between him and the poachers, who came out one night with their nets in great force. Gentleman Jack and his watchers were down upon 'em as they were beating their first field. Such a fight ensued as never was. But, bless you! they hadn't a chance. My show man tackled three single-handed, and



Tipping Scene

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punished them as I really believe poachers never were punished before. The watchers said they never saw such a bruiser in their lives. If the Tipton Slasher was about, I'd back Gentleman Jack against him to-morrow. He's a capital shot too. I don't care about keepers shooting with me as a rule, but I took him out with me one day just to see if he could shoot, and I can tell you, he was as quick as lightning—as a rule I've always found your gamekeeper as slow as a top, haven't you? The only thing he did wrong during the day, was once when we both shot at the same bird at the same moment; he claimed it, and what's more wouldn't give in, as he should have done, seeing that I was his master. However, I said nothing. Indeed, I rather liked his independence of spirit than not. Yes, you may depend upon it I've drawn a prize in the lottery at last,' said my uncle; 'the pheasants have done wonderfully well; the poachers are too much afraid of Gentleman Jack to come near the place, and I hope next week we shall all of us be able to shoot away until our guns are red hot.'

The following day being Sunday, and a bad cold keeping me to the house, the combination of circumstances prevented me catching a sight of the renowned Gentleman Jack until the day arrived—the following Tuesday—when we were to commence beating the coverts. As we marched along, eight guns in all, my uncle proudly leading the way, *en route* to the Home wood, where we were to commence operations, everybody was talking of my uncle's last acquisition in keepers.

'Have you seen him yet, George?' inquired one.

'Such a swell!' said another.

'I hope all you fellows have got your purses ready,' laughed Charley, 'for Gentleman Jack takes nothing but paper.'

'Here's the Home wood at last,' added Charley, taking my arm; 'yonder are the beaters, and last, but not least, here is Gentleman Jack coming.'

A tall figure, clad in brown velveteen and long yellow gaiters, looking quite the gamekeeper, now came forward, and took off, his hat with a comprehensive sweep that took in the whole of the company. What was it that caused me to nearly drop my gun the moment I caught sight of the swell keeper? It can't be Lovel! It must be a dream! I rubbed my eyes, and looked again; there was no doubt about it this time. In spite of his thick moustache and long coal-black beard covering his chest, in spite of the velveteen get-up and cloth gaiters, I had recognised

in Gentleman Jack, my uncle's swell keeper, none other than my long-lost friend and comrade—Ned Lovel. There was no doubt about it, it was he all right, and what is more, I saw he twigg'd me, as indeed it would have been odd if he hadn't. Owing to the excitement I laboured under, I can safely say I never shot worse in my life, than I did up to luncheon-time. I must say the way Ned acted the keeper did him infinite credit; the business-like manner in which he arranged the different beats, and the way he managed the beaters, always keeping the latter well in line, was simply admirable. And to finish up, when after luncheon my uncle called him forward and gave him a glass of sherry, to hear Ned say, 'Gentlemen, all!' previous to tossing it off, was more than I could stand, and I was obliged to turn aside and hide my merriment. To see the bold Ned receive his tips, too, was not the worst part of the day's entertainment. My own tip was paper, certainly; but not the five-pound note suggested by Charley, but a scrap out of my note-book on which I wrote, 'I hope you've got a good place.'

'Mum's the word,' whispered Ned, with a grin, as he pocketed the note and touched his hat.

I had no opportunity of seeing Ned privately until the following Sunday, as the shooting of the coverts went on every day; meanwhile I of course, kept his counsel, and contented myself by lauding the new keeper up to the skies. My uncle, needless to say, was in ecstasies, as well he might be, for he had not had such a head of game for years, if ever.

On Sunday afternoon I stole away, and made straight for the keeper's cottage. What a meeting it was! Never did whisky toddy (an excellent tap was kept, by the way) taste so pleasant as that I partook of in Ned's cottage that afternoon seated in a Windsor chair. How we talked over old times, and what a number of pipes we smoked may be imagined.

'And you really like gamekeeping, and won't be induced to chuck it up, eh?' said I, as I rose to take my leave, for it was getting late.

'Oh, no! I intend to stick to it,' replied Ned, 'for the present at all events. When my old uncle dies, then perhaps I shall cut the profession, but certainly not until that happens. Believe me, I'm perfectly happy, I've got a capital home, and I think you must allow that your uncle, (who, by the way, is one of the best old fellows I ever came across) might do worse than have yours truly for a gamekeeper. Now that you've found me out, I'll

drop you a line now and again, to say how I get on—you'll be coming here again, of course, before long? at least I hope so. Good-bye, old fellow,' said Ned, wringing my hand; 'take care of yourself, and above all, "Hal, an you love me," don't let out to a soul the real history of "Gentleman Jack."' "

A WORD ON BOXING.

By 'FISTICUFF.'

WAS the boxing boom, that has swept over England and America during the last few years, done any good, or given any fillip, to what is justly called the 'Noble Art of Self Defence?' In plain English, has it encouraged men to learn to make a study of the science, to take it as a healthy exercise, who perhaps would not otherwise have done so? I may be wrong, but I fancy not; at all events not in this country.

If a contest such as that which took place a short time ago between Jackson and Slavin could occasionally be brought off in some large building, say, for instance, the Agricultural Hall at Islington, or Olympia, with prices of admission so arranged, that instead of the exhibition being reserved for the sole delectation of a select few, able and willing to pay through the nose for their fun, it could be witnessed by some thousands of people, then I believe it would give such an impetus to boxing, both as a science and bodily exercise, as it had never experienced before, not even in the very palmiest days of the ring.

In making these remarks I do not for a moment mean to imply that the number of young men of the present day who go in for learning boxing has decreased at all, or that public interest in the science has diminished in the least. If I did, the sight of the hundreds of would-be spectators that are obliged to be turned away for want of room on exhibition nights at that well-known, and popular athletic club, the 'German Gymnasium,' familiarly known as the 'German Gym.,' and where some of the very best boxing, both amateur and professional, in London is to be witnessed, would give me the lie at once.

The glove fight between Jackson and Slavin was probably as fine an example of pluck and science as has ever been witnessed, certainly of late years. There was not a shadow of

a suspicion of what is termed, in the phraseology of the P. R., a 'cross ;' the spirit of fair play ruled throughout the piece. Each boxer tried all he could to win, and that the best man won there is not the slightest doubt. Under these circumstances, then, it appears to me a pity that such a fine exhibition as that held at the National Sporting Club, appealing as it did, from its very manliness, to all robust-minded Englishmen, should have been witnessed by such a very select few.

The last battle of importance, that between Pritchard and Hall, both of them performers of more than ordinary merit, was witnessed by even fewer spectators, there being less than fifty lookers-on, all told, at the fight, which took place on a stage erected in the stable yard of a well-known Sussex trainer.

Boxing, in my opinion, is a pastime that should be encouraged in every possible way, for a finer bodily exercise, fencing perhaps excepted, does not exist. It is not only good for the muscles, bringing as it does nearly every one of them into play, but it quickens the eye, and is beneficial to the temper. If a boxer once loses his temper, he is done.

It is a marvel that, with all the big money prizes that have been given lately for boxing competitions, the United Kingdom has not been able to produce a single man capable of taking down the numbers of Messrs. Jackson, Slavin, & Co. There must be plenty of men equal, if not superior, in physique, otherwise our race of athletes must surely have degenerated sadly ; and there ought to be men capable of standing up to, if not beating, the cornstalks and darkies that come over here ; but up to the present they have not been found, and it certainly does not say much for our vaunted superiority as a nation in the use of nature's weapons that it should be so.

For all the good that he is, in fact, at the present moment, as an upholder of the fistic honour of Great Britain, the prizefighter might just as well be as extinct as the Dodo.

Boxing in England probably never received such an impetus as it did when Tom Sayers and Heenan fought their celebrated battle at Farnborough. Everybody, ladies and all, went mad upon the subject for the time being. The observant Mr. Punch depicted a triumphant prizefighter leaning back in a chair after his exertions, being made much of by a lot of pretty girls. In another sketch, the scene of which is a nursery, two small boys are represented having a turn with the gloves, whilst Mamma, standing by, advises one of them to 'pop in his left.' At the

same moment one of John Leech's pretty maid-servants announces, 'Professor Mauley, Ma'am.'

Old ring-goers, as they looked on, rubbed their hands, and prognosticated a return of the palmy days of the P. R. ; but it was not to be. It might have been so, I verily believe, if the pugilists could only have behaved themselves, but they failed, as usual, and the fight for the championship, between Heenan and Tom King, which was a sell from beginning to end, may be said to have knocked the last nail in the coffin of the P. R.

It may not be generally known, but I believe it was beyond a doubt, that Heenan accepted a large bribe to take a dose preparatory to entering the ring, though, to his credit be it said, he made the proviso that he should do his best to win all the same. That he did win was beyond a doubt, for he knocked King senseless in an early part of the fight, and, if the referee had done his duty, he would have awarded him the victory. As it was, however, a row was purposely got up in the ring, during which King recovered himself sufficiently to be led to the scratch. Meanwhile the poison had begun to work on his opponent, thanks, probably, to the excitement he was in ; the consequence being that he lost his senses, and King in his turn proceeded to do as he pleased with him.

To show what a barefaced robbery it was, the writer, a boy at Eton at the time, well recollects coming home on leave in the beginning of November, and, whilst out shooting, one of the guns asking him which of the two men the Eton boys were backing. Heenan had just been down there with a circus, and as we had all paid a visit to Bachelor's Acre and made his acquaintance, we naturally plumped for him, and I said so.

Imagine my astonishment when my friend informed me that he knew for a fact that the fight was sold, and that it had been arranged that King was to win.

The result proved how correct his information was. Had the fight been contested on its merits, there is not a question but that the Benicia Boy would have won, he being far the cleverer of the two, as regards science.

Heenan was a particularly quiet man, quite a gentleman in fact to talk to, and it is a pity that his sojourn in England did not prove so profitable as it might have done. As it was, he was peculiarly unfortunate. To begin with, not long after his defeat by King, he was in the disastrous railway accident that occurred at Egham to one of the crowded trains returning from

Ascot Races, and got considerably damaged thereby. Then he tried bookmaking, and that he did not find answer. Finally he died of consumption at a comparatively early age, the knocking about he received in the railway collision, and the injuries sustained in his fight with King, having a good deal to do, I fancy, with his premature death.

Following the Heenan and King fiasco came several more mills on the cross. The whole business, in fact, was played so very low down at last that even the staunchest supporters of the P. R., sick of the perpetual swindles that were carried on, withdrew their support in disgust. The scenes of robbery and violence too that went on at these so-called prizefights were enough in themselves to deter decent people, who had any regard for their own personal safety, from attending.

The late Mr. Henry Buck, the well-known 'Hotspur' of the *Daily Telegraph*, told the writer that one day as he was returning on board the steamer after a fight down the river, which he had attended in his capacity of reporter for *Bell's Life*, 'the boys' (as the biggest thieves and scoundrels London can produce are playfully called) amused themselves by laying hold of every well-dressed person present and robbing him of all he had about him. Two or three of them would seize the unfortunate *voyageur*, and hold him up in spite of his struggles and remonstrances, whilst the rest picked his pockets. Finally they served Mr. Buck, who one would have thought would have escaped scot free, in the same fashion, robbing him of every thing he had about him, including his watch.

Highly indignant, as was only natural, he went next day to a well-known backer of fighting men, a publican in the East End, and remonstrated at the treatment he, the representative of the pet newspaper of all the 'pugs,' had received.

'Don't say another word, Mr. Buck,' was the reply. 'Just step in here, sir, please.'

'Hotspur,' like a good boy did as he was bidden, and on entering a back room, beheld, to his astonishment all laid out on the table, some fifty or sixty watches. 'There!' exclaimed his magnanimous host, with a comprehensive sweep of his arm, embracing the whole of the exhibits, 'Take yer pick of the lot, sir!'

If my memory serves me, 'Hotspur,' after a careful survey of the 'tickers,' finally, to his great delight, lit upon his own.

Yes, prizefighting has had its day, and a good job too, for at best it was but a demoralising spectacle. Nobody can help but

admire the pluck of a man who, without the vestige of a chance of winning, comes up to the call of time, round after round, with indomitable courage, only to receive fresh punishment. Such a man is a hero in his way, and one is proud of him as a countryman; but to what good does such an exhibition tend? Who is a bit the better for witnessing it or hearing about it?

On the other hand, I cannot imagine a finer sight than a good set-to with the gloves between two professors of the 'noble art' in tip-top condition, such as Peter Jackson and Frank Slavin for instance. There is little or no danger to life in the display, and none of the brutality inseparable from a battle with the naked fists. One man must win, and before he wins it is necessary that he should so punish his man that he cannot come up to the scratch when 'time' is called.

The spectator is aware of all this, and he also knows that though effectually settled for the time being, the loser will be himself again in a very few moments, and in all probability sharing a bottle of champagne with his successful rival. This is as it should be, so '*Vive le boxe!*' say I.

THE ALL ROUND COUNTY.

By BRAMHAM MOOR.



FROM Humber to Tees the broad acres extend,
And long-reaching moorlands that seem without end,
The wild soaring hills keeping guard o'er the dales,
And streams of proud Pennine in quest of the vales;
The scenes of great battles, of old Marston Moor,
Where Rupert's fierce riders first heard the faint roar
Of Cromwell's stern Ironsides, who swelled like the tide
O'erwhelming the brave cavaliers in their pride—
Relentless, resistless, till Naseby's green down
Was strewn with the gallants who fought for the Crown.
The bards of Northallerton pæans still sing
Of Thurston who humbled proud Scotia's King;
The land's full of history: granting the space
I'd sing of the feud 'tween the Lancaster race:
For Wakefield and Ravenspur each proudly rings
Of deeds in the days of the 'Maker of Kings';
But Pegasus now I must pull your *right* rein,
Come back to the sporting on moor, stream, and plain.

Our county's 'all-round,' Sirs, whatever you be,
It's hard but in Yorkshire good sport you may see :
The satin still whistles o'er Doncaster Moor,
The Knavesmire still rings with stentorian roar,
When Yorkshire bred horses come in with a swing,
And Tykes are elate in and out of 'the ring.'
At ev'ning they talk of proud Voltigeur's day,
And that when the mare from the field ran away ;
Blink Bonny to Epsom the Yorkshiremen sent
To bring the 'blue ribbon' to north of the Trent
All honour we pay to the 'Great Northern' mare,
For vict'ries with fillies at Epsom are rare ;
But two more achieved it, so all will agree,
Blink Bonny did well to be one of the three.
The 'Dutchman' as gamely to victory flew ;
Again the Tykes scored with the fleet 'Caller Ou,'
We claim West Australian and Warlock as well,
The feats of Imperieuse turfites can tell.
The gunner again through our acres can range,
Hospitality find at each Manor and Grange,
A Tyke to his guest holds wide open the door.
We've 'birds' on the lowlands and grouse on the moor,
Fleet pussy gives sport on the East Riding lea,
Three Waterloo Cup nominations you'll see.
We carried that cup with our fleet 'Bed of Stone,'
While 'working' and running was bred in the bone
Of smart 'Bit of Fashion,' sufficient to gain
The coursing 'blue ribbon' on Altcar's wide plain,
Lobelia's record our annals to grace,
Though she but 'ran up' in that classical chase.
Are you fond of the scarlet? I'll warrant you'll find
We'd hunting in Yorkshire, aye, time out of mind.
We breed our own horses, and make it our pride
To teach all our tyros those horses to ride,
While 'pug's' cosy quarters in Yorkshire ne'er lacks
Where gorses are wanting, we build him some stacks
Of faggots. You'll find them throughout the North-East,
To shelter that varmint, 'the little red beast.'
Your horn you can wind in the land of the Tykes,
The land of Lane Fox, and of old Tatton Sykes.
The Badsworth's well known, 'York and Anisty' the same,
And Londesborough's hounds in the field have a name ;
We've otters near Whernside, of badgers a few,
And suitable fields for the 'jolly dogs,' too.
If knights of the rod should come strolling about,
Our streams are alive with the mettlesome trout.

When summer comes on and the flannels are seen,
And wielders of willows disport on the green,
The Tykes let the horses and dogs have a rest.
Of cricketing counties they'll tackle the best.
Draw stumps when November is gloomy and cold,
At football they always prove lasting and bold.
I think then, dear reader, in honour your bound
To own I'm all *right* when I call them 'all *round*.'

A BELVOIR RED LETTER DAY.

By CUTHBERT BRADLEY.

IN the uncertainty of the sport of fox-hunting consists half its fascination ; nevertheless, it is but in human nature to grumble when we do get bad days. Even during the most successful season we seldom score more than three or four red letter days, and should we be fortunate enough to be out on two of those days, and live through one of them to the end, it is a joy that we remember through all our days, and to which memory will cling with a constancy and fondness that it will evince for but few other events in life.

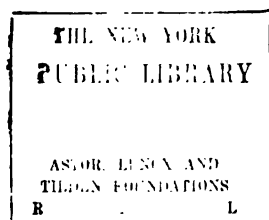
In order to relate a story of a red letter day it is almost incumbent on the writer to jump—on paper—some great and fearful places that would make your heart ache if you met them outside the pages of an exciting novel. But, dear reader, I have no wish to be numbered with those who ride hard after dinner, so I will confine myself in these pages to facts. Last season's sport was undoubtedly the worst on record, but in February we had some exceptionally good runs with the Belvoir hounds, and my narrative shall be the events that happened on February 13th, 1891, with the ducal pack. A big red letter is scored against that day by many a good Belvoir sportsman, as well as wearers of a habit, for two ladies were numbered amongst the half-dozen or so who lived to the end of that remarkable day's sport, and saw hounds whipped off in the darkness by Grimsthorpe Castle.

Real sport is more possible on the Lincolnshire than the Leicestershire side of the hunt ; the country to ride over is in parts quite as good, the hounds are the same, the foxes are undoubtedly better, and the field is a local one of reasonable dimensions, and of less ardent aspiration than a Leicestershire

crowd. The meet was Aswarby Park, Lincolnshire, the seat of Sir Thomas Whichcote, as staunch a preserver of foxes, and as fine a man to hounds in his day, as Lincolnshire ever boasted of. Now he is contented to follow on wheels, and criticise our doings through a pair of field-glasses. The morning was bright, and there was a nip of frost in the air, and Gillard with his staff of three in pink, arrived on the scene a little before eleven o'clock with the small lady pack. What a show the little bitches make, good looks, straight legs, and long pedigrees describe them, for they are as level as the sand on the sea-shore, measuring twenty-two inches at the shoulder. The Duke of Rutland's hounds having so long occupied the place of premier pack, and the beautiful Belvoir blood assisted so effectually to improve every kennel in the kingdom, makes unqualified praise a matter of course, as the performances of the pack are necessarily of such wide interest.

As probably this particular day's sport has become a matter of history, it is as well that the names of those who assembled at the meet should, as nearly as possible, be given; and if memory serves me correctly, amongst those in the saddle were Lord Edward Manners, (in the capacity of field master), Major W. Longstaffe, Mr. John Welby, Major and Mrs. Amcotts, Colonel Mildmay and the Misses Willson, Captain L. Cox, Mr. T. and the Misses Heathcote, Mr. J. and Mrs. Hutchinson, Mr. T. Robarts, Mr. J. Fullerton, Mr. W. Reeves, Mons. Roy, Mons. Couturie, the Countess de Clairemont, Colonel Parker, Mr. C. and Miss G. Parker, the Rev. G. and Miss Carter, Major Sands, Mr. Hodson, Mr. Hemery, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Lubbock, the Hon. S. Petre, Mr. Campbell Dick, Mr. and Mrs. Phillips, Major A. de Burton, Captain Renny, Mr. W. Hornsby, Mr. James and Mr. Cecil Rudkin, Mr. James Hoyes, Mr. A. Pick, Mr. T. Casswell, Mr. H. M. Escritt, and several other well-known faces in a South Lincolnshire field, whose names escape my recollection. To give a general outline of the day's sport, we had in the morning a burst of twenty minutes at a pace that fairly blew up our fox; in the afternoon we had a fine hunting run after a straight-necked one who gave us a ten-milè point.

We started the day's work by riding to Burton Gorse, close by, a very pretty place in which to see a fox found, lying as it does on gently rising ground; but it is a difficult place to get well away from, as it contains a large area of covert, with the surrounding ground of the wettest ridge and furrow, fit for



nothing but a web-footed creature. A brace of the varmint were at home, and, with a merry chorus, the hounds bustled them round the gorse, Frank Gillard riding through with them, his horse hopping over the gorse-bushes like a stag. 'A fox well found,' as Beckford says, 'is half killed,' and a shrill 'Tally-ho!' proclaimed him well away, the hounds breaking covert at the top end of the gorse, the wrong side from which to get a good start for the larger portion of the field. What a pace those little Belvoir bitches went! racing as if glued to his brush, the pace being too good for music. The fortunate few who got away with hounds had plenty to do to keep their places and look after their fences; for every fence in this stiff plough county is fortified with a deep dug drain, and a horse must know how to spread himself out. A horse never carries a man better than when he has nothing in front of him but the hounds, and few were the dirty coats amongst those who saw what hounds were doing. There is a saying that the criterion of pace is the length of the tail; and on this morning, the little Belvoir bitches streaked across those ploughs, which carry a capital scent when they are wet, and we were spread out in a fan shape, all over the face of the country, from Aswarby Thorns nearly to Kirkby Mount. The coat tails of those in the distance, as they bobbed over their fences in the same field with the hounds, never came back to us; how we hated them, for ride as we would, we never gained a yard. On the ploughs near Kirkby, the hounds wheeled sharp to the left, and this gave some of us a chance to come up with a nick, leaving Quarrington to the right.

Undoubtedly our fox's point was Rauceby, that land of foxes, where he might have beaten us with the aid of a friend, but being headed by a shepherd's dog, he changed his plans, and with a sharp left-hand turn, ran straight for the village of Silk Willoughby. No mortal fox could live long the pace at which these hounds were bustling him, and, being very distressed, he resorted to other tactics than flight. At the end of the village, the door of a cottage stood open, and entering, he was glad to seek shelter inside, after going for twenty minutes at racing pace. A buxom young woman, nursing a baby, had the presence of mind to immediately close the door, or she would undoubtedly have had her cottage full of hounds, who might have eaten the baby in their eagerness. The baby lay in front of the hearth airing—which I am told is the usual custom with small children—and the old fox jumped over him and went up the

chimney. Gillard was on the scene almost as soon as the hounds were, and jumping off his steaming horse, he made his way to the cottage door round which the pack were baying for admittance. With his well-known courtesy, the Duke's huntsman raised his cap, and proceeded to allay the fears of the lady of the house, and also the now squalling baby, and apologised for the rude intrusion of the fox. We could not help being reminded of that old fashioned sporting print by Rowlandson of a not very dissimilar incident, where a fox had sought shelter in a cottage, and the boisterous, rough huntsman and hounds, are depicted dragging the fox from under the old lady's petticoats. How manners and customs have changed since those days, and pink with politeness wins the day, as it will with the fair sex, all the world over.

Proceedings to dislodge the fox from his hiding-place now commenced. Brotherell, our 'Jack the runner,' appeared on the scene as if he had dropped from the clouds, for I'll swear I saw him at the meet, and we had galloped our horses to steam and lather to get here, but his long legs, like the legs of Elisha, had out-run us. Crofts, the first-whip proceeded to climb on the cottage roof as nimbly as a cat, and peering down the chimney-pot, declared he could see the fox half-way up, looking at him. He 'boo-boomed' down the chimney and scolded him, and the village yokels flattened their noses against the window-panes, looking at Gillard and Jack inside by the fire-place, and jeered at the old fox. The argument that at length prevailed upon the fox to shift took the form of a clothes-prop, applied from above; he then descended, and seized hold of Gillard's proffered whip-thong, when Jack saw his opportunity to catch hold of him by the scruff of his neck; not, however, before he succeeded in getting one of his tushes through his coat sleeve. Carrying him into the open, the sight of his sooty form and white, grinning ivories, scared the village yokels, who fled, thinking they had seen the evil one. The field, which had had plenty of time to draw up from all quarters, now formed a large body of horsemen packed in the lane, awaiting the result of the aforesaid proceedings, and called to Jack to carry the fox into an adjoining pasture and turn him down. He feigned death until he was quite sure that he was free, then away he shot like an arrow. 'Tally-ho's' rent the air, the hounds in the adjacent field caught the glad sound, and coming to it, picked up the line, and, with a joyful burst of music, raced forward. The large field issuing

from the lane, here pressed on the pack, and drove them over the line, but Gillard was not to be beaten, and riding to the grass fields on the right, capped them on the line, and coursing their fox for two fields, the leading hounds dashed out, and 'Who-whoop!' rang out, as they fastened their teeth in his sable form.

Swarby Gorse was decided upon to supply our afternoon fox, but for a wonder this snug little covert proved tenantless. Not far from here a man with a wooden leg told us of an outlying fox in some fallow fields in the direction of Aswarby. I never saw a wooden leg possessed with so much animation. The keen spirit of sport put life into it, and it was hard to say which was the better leg of the two. The fox jumped up in front of the hounds out of a tussock in the hedgerow, and away we chased him to Aswarby Thorns, where the hounds checked. From this place two and a half couple of hounds ran out on the far side of the covert, and got away with their fox, and the main body of the pack were only able to hunt slowly in their tracks, so we had a long trail across country before we found the run-away hounds by Dembleby Thorns, where they had lost their quarry. This was, undoubtedly, a piece of bad luck, for the scent had served us badly, and many here abandoned the chase and turned for home.

Gillard led the way to Newton Wood, an excellent fox covert, under the guardianship of Mr. Tom Heathcote and his sisters, and a diminished field accompanied hounds. There was a keenness in the air, for it was late in the afternoon, and hounds had not proceeded very far into covert before they roused a fox. Down the whole length of the wood they stuck to him, their joyful chorus as they crashed through the undergrowth proclaiming a scent, and that they were not to be easily shaken off. He was soon viewed leaving covert towards Haceby, a fine dog-fox with well-tagged brush, and a dash of grey in his coat; and a fox is never so good as when he is grey. By Braceby he wheeled sharp to the left, and hounds ran very prettily over the grass fields, heading away for Sapperton and Pickworth coverts. We had cantered up the road by the wood-side, but now struck into the fields on our right, swinging merrily along over the grass with no crowd or bustle, congratulating ourselves on our luck at having stayed out long enough, for there is great pleasure in telling those who miss a good thing, all about it next day.

The way our fox headed straight through the Sapperton and

Pickworth coverts stamped him at once as a straight-necked one who meant making his point. A February dog-fox when found away from his own ground will often run very straight, let the wind blow which way it will; it is the courting season of the year, and foxes emulate deeds of daring, as if to prove that 'none but the brave deserve the fair.' We rode the woodside and were only just in time to see hounds break covert on the Pickworth road, cast about, and then throw up their heads. We had crowded on to the road in our hot haste and over-ridden the line, and might have lost a good run, for Gillard was not sure that his fox had gone on. However, our top-weight, Mr. James Hoyes, had his wits about him, and rode gently forward down the hedge-row of the field opposite to a boy scaring crows. 'Had he seen the fox?' 'Yes!' A halloo and a hat held high gave us the line. Hounds stooped to the scent, and picking up the lost thread, burst forth into melody, as they raced up the hedge-side, heading away for Lenton pastures.

My stars! We were in for a good thing, and if the going had not been good, so that horses were able to gallop on the top, many of the one-horse-a-day people would have had to draw rein and cry 'enough.' However, away we went, with a beautiful line of country before us, with never more than fair fences, but plenty of them, and quite big enough by the end of the run, when horses tired, and jumped with less certainty. The pace was never severe throughout, and hounds were in view all the way half a field in front of us, with Gillard riding on their left. One of our number, in jumping a hedge, landed with a clatter on the top of a harrow lying under the fence and came down, fortunately escaping serious damage. Swinging along at an easy hand-gallop over the ploughs and stubbles by Hanby, the hounds checked slightly, as scent did not lay quite so well. Here we came across one or two rough old dykes, which required jumping or letting alone, but horses, like men, know the difference between a good day and a bad one, and cocking their ears, and reaching at their bridles, not a single horse made a mistake. A gate let us on, and another off the Folkingham Road, and once more we were in a grass country to the left of Lenton village. How the ubiquitous spire of Lenton church stood out against the evening sky, exhibiting a grand landmark in this beautiful bit of grass, equal to anything in Leicestershire, in the opinion of those who have ridden across both. The late Duke of Rutland subscribed five pounds towards the restoration

of this church spire, after its qualities as a landmark to hunting men had been pointed out to him.

It is uncertain how an average field would get through a run without a man to ride to ; very few ever get so far as to strike out a line for themselves. We had a good pilot in this run, a man with an eye for a country, not one of your reckless hard riders who would have downed half the field that tried to follow his lead. The tall, slight figure in the black coat, riding a thoroughbred black mare, that could twinkle her fore-feet as nimbly as any *première danseuse*, led the run from find to finish. Three, if not four, scarlet coats were in it, and the four sisters saw most of it, two of them finishing ; these, with about half-a-dozen black and tweed coats and pot-hats, comprised the field. Below Lenton village, a big, formidable-looking place turned a few towards the village to get round it, and lost them the rest of the run. A widish beck with big, untrimmed black-thorn fence on the landing side was the obstacle, and our pilot, spotting a weak place in the fence, crashed at it and let us through. Keisby was to the front of us, and rising the hill, we passed this hamlet on our right, and our fox skirted by the Keisby and Aslackby coverts without entering them. The pace that the hounds went was never too severe, but I have seen these little Belvoir bitches on the Leicestershire side when there has been a burning scent, go such a pace, that no horse could live with them. There was time to note some of the trivial incidents of the run. One sportsman, in jumping rather a blind place, caught his spur and left it by the fence, another lost his hat, but neither would stop to recover their property for fear of losing their places. Gillard's horse broke his bridle, and was ridden to the end with only the bridoon in his mouth.

Swinging to the right, our fox took us across the ploughs and alternate grass-lands above the village of Hawthorpe ; one little mare carrying a lady here showed signs of giving in, and dropped her hind legs in a fence, which fortunately gave way, sending up a shower of rotten sticks, and narrowly missing a fall. Crashing through the coverts of Bulby Hall Wood, the hounds must have been close to their fox, for they came together with a fierce chorus that sent the pigeons rocketing from their perches where they had settled themselves for the night. Another fox jumped up in this plantation, and hounds divided, the main body of the pack running back to Aslackby Wood with the fresh fox. Those who turned to them lost the rest of the run, for Crofts,

the first whip, came back to stop them. Gillard, and a few of his followers, with seven couple and a half of the hounds, stuck to their hunted fox, and chased him away to the left of Irnham village, skirting through the corner of North and South Wood, and so ran him into the Grimsthorpe coverts. Here there was much game moving to foul the line, and hounds had to puzzle their way, and threw up in the park by the castle just as darkness was coming on. Two ladies, one riding a bang-tailed black steeple-chase mare, and the other a bay cob, showing Arab blood, were up at the finish, with some half-dozen horsemen. It was a matter of congratulation that such a good fox had beaten us, and lived to run another day, for he had given us a ten mile point over a beautiful line of hunting country. Let us hope that such a stout-hearted one kept his tryst with his vixen on St. Valentine's morn the following day, and that we may chase some cubs this season worthy of their sire.

Hounds had a long way to get back to kennels that night, for from Grimsthorpe Castle in Lincolnshire to Belvoir Castle in Leicestershire it is fifteen miles as the crow flies, and I do not suppose you could ride the distance under twenty miles. The night was dark, and the roads were stony, so that when Ingoldsby village was reached, horn lanterns had to be borrowed from a farmhouse, or hounds might have been run into by anybody driving late on the road without lamps. The hound-van, with its pick-axe team, was in readiness to do the last stage from Grantham, and Belvoir kennels were reached at 9.30. Only one hound was missing out of the fifteen and half couples that left kennels in the morning, and that spoke much for the abilities of the staff of whips, Caine Croft, Frank Gillard, jun., and Bob Knott, considering the large area of ground we rode over on that Belvoir red letter day.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

By FOX RUSSELL.

WELCOME, welcome, cousins, one and all, to England and to Prosper Farm!' and the speaker, issuing from an inner hall of the good old Kentish homestead, warmly grasped by the hand, one after the other, a party of four visitors now exchanging the blue bitterness of a



Belvoir Kennels 9.50 PM.

Charles H. B. H. H.

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north-west wind, that gave every indication of an approaching snowstorm, for the bright and genial atmosphere of the oak-wainscotted room, with its cheery log fire and heavily curtained windows.

The host was typical of all that was good in the now, alas ! nearly extinct race of yeomen farmers. Tall and portly, with the broad shoulders and ruddy countenance which told of a life in the open air, passed amid scenes of constant activity, 'Farmer John,' or more correctly speaking, Mr. John Maxwell, was known throughout the county as the best of good fellows, a model farmer, a brilliant shot, and a man who had forgotten almost as much about horses and hounds, as most people ever knew. His younger brother had, in early life, made a home and a fortune in the New World, and brought up a family of four sons and daughters there before himself paying the debt of nature. Their mother had died young, and the now grown-up offshoots were receiving, at the moment our story opens, the heartiest of welcomes from their uncle, on this, their first visit to England.

Sons and daughters of Albion acclimatise very readily in the States, and to all intents and purposes, the four children of honest William Maxwell were Americans, pure and simple. This fact only made their visit the more interesting to their cousins at Prosper Farm, and an almost international character was given to their Christmas gathering upon this occasion, from the presence of a Monsieur Hippolyte Fleury, a young man who had arrived with only a hat-box and a letter of introduction from an old companion, in former days, of Farmer John's. The Frenchman had lost no time in ingratiating himself with everybody in the house, and although he dated his coming rather less than a week back, had already invested himself with all the airs and most of the liberties, of an old friend of the family.

To this gentleman, both Seth and Sam, the two young American brothers, at once took an instinctive dislike. What came of it we shall see later on. Their sisters, Annie and Rebecca, on the contrary, voted the lively Gaul 'real elegant.'

Within an hour of their arrival, the whole party, consisting of the farmer, his unmarried sister, Tabitha, his two daughters, Grace and Mary, the four cousins and Monsieur Fleury, were comfortably seated round the dining-table, and commencing in earnest, to do justice to the multifarious good things spread thereon. The gay Hippolyte had taken care to place himself next to Grace Maxwell, to whom he had paid assiduous attention

from almost the first day of his arrival. M. Fleury was a gentleman who considered that his first study in life was to look well after himself, and having discovered that all the broad acres of Prosper Farm would eventually devolve upon the two comely daughters of the house, had quickly made up his mind that Grace—*plus* the acres—would make an excellent Madame Fleury, and accordingly to her did he lay siege. She would, doubtless, surrender at discretion, her *dot* would be a really substantial one, and he would succeed all along the line. He had been asked to stay a few days, and finding himself in such comfortable quarters, and with so excellent a plan on hand for the benefiting of his own condition, he entertained no present intention of terminating his visit.

Within a week, Christmas would be upon them, and early in the new year the cousins would have to leave. M. Hippolyte calculated upon outstaying them; unluckily for that gentleman, they calculated upon outstaying him!

Two days after their arrival, the weather having become a little warmer, Farmer John informed them that the foxhounds would meet, next morning, on the lawn in front of the house, and that he was going to entertain 'all and sundry' to a hunt breakfast.

Wonderful to relate, an ideal hunting day was ushered in with the dawn, and everyone in the house was early astir making ready for the expected meeting. M. Hippolyte, who had been promised a mount by his host, appeared in a fearsome costume, consisting of a pair of tight-fitting dove-coloured breeches, high Wellington boots reaching above the knee, and a heavily braided jacket, all over buttons, and very much too small for him. His head was adorned with a brown velvet hunting cap, whilst in one hand he carried a coach horn about a yard long, and in the other an otter spear. From this it may be imagined that his ideas upon the subject of fox-hunting were a trifle vague; but M. Fleury had evidently looked to create somewhat of a sensation at the breakfast when he appeared. He did.

As he entered the door of the dining-room, where a large company of red and black-coated horsemen were already assembled, discussing John Maxwell's good cheer, the worthy Master of the Hounds was in the act of raising his silver tankard to his lips: the sight of the Frenchman, however, was so alarming, that he slowly returned the tankard to the table, setting it down again with the contents untasted. Another gentleman, who was

conveying a piece of pigeon pie to his mouth, suspended the operation in mid-air and gazed, spell-bound, at the apparition before him. Most of the company smothered their laughter and said nothing, but Seth, as he explained to his cousins afterwards, was 'bound to say something or bust.'

'Say, Mister Flowery' (this was as near as Seth ever got to pronouncing the name), 'you goin' to send the hounds home and take the job off their hands with that toasting fork you got there?'

'Ah, *oui*! I can do him myself. I can kill ze little fogs—how you call him? Zere is no need, *pas de besoin, n'est ce pas?* for ze dogs. I steek him wis my spear.'

'Or blow him to death with your post-horn, eh?' rejoined Seth, with an almost imperceptible wink at his brother, who immediately struck in with—

'Should say, now, sir, that if the fox was to come upon you suddenly, in that picturesque costume, he might die from shock.'

'*Mais oui, certainement,*' assented the Frenchman, who was far too excited to notice that they were getting a rise out of him.

Soon afterwards, a move was made to the drive in front of the house, where the pack had already arrived, and forty or fifty hunters were being led slowly up and down by their attendant grooms. Then ensued the usual scramble for horses, every one apparently wanting something done which had been left undone: with one, it was a girth to be tightened, with another, a throat lash let out, whilst a third required a stirrup leather pulled up a hole higher. At last, however, order took the place of chaos, and even gouty Sir Thomas Harkaway and old Mr. Fivebars were in their saddles. M. Hippolyte had been induced, at the earnest solicitation of Grace Maxwell, to abandon his spear and post-horn, and to substitute, for them, a long-thonged hunting crop, which he carried like a darning needle, and made frantic efforts to crack. All he succeeded in doing, in this way, was to flip the right ear of the huntsman, and finally knock his own cap off.

Hounds were quickly thrown into a large patch of furze, and as quickly was a fox on foot. Out they went on the far side of the covert, their music almost drowning the running accompaniment of the cries of the yokels on foot, the sharp 'toot, toot' of the horn, and the irregular, but continuous, thud of the hoofs behind them. The strangely clad figure of the Frenchman was seen right in front, pressing, indeed, rather too closely on the pack for the master's peace of mind. On they went, over

a beautiful piece of grass, bounded on the far side by a stiff blackthorn fence, with a ditch towards them. Until viewing this obstacle, M. Hippolyte's joy, at leading the field, had been supreme: now, however, for the first time, he began to feel certain misgivings as to whether he would not have been a happier man had he been occupying a less conspicuous position! It was too late, however, to think of this now; he must jump or go home. One moment's thought sufficed him to make up his mind firmly to adopt the latter alternative: it was a loss of glory, but a distinct step on the path of safety. Unluckily, though, he had reckoned, not without his host, but without his host's horse, for that old campaigner, with one eye on the fence and the other on the now flying pack beyond it, had not the remotest intention of stopping, and all Monsieur's efforts to the contrary notwithstanding, the veteran cocked his ears forward and with outstretched neck and eager eye, raced at the leap, rising in the air just at the right moment, clearing ditch and thorn fence, in splendid style, and landing, with a foot or two to spare, in the field beyond.

But, fine as his horse's performance was, M. Fleury did not accompany him! As the animal rose, the man fell. Flat on his back, in the muddy ditch, the no longer lively Gaul lay outstretched, quite unhurt, but terribly frightened. Some of the foot-people quickly arrived on the spot, and assisted the fallen Nimrod to his feet; his horse was quickly caught and brought back to him, but nothing would induce him to remount.

'*Mais non,*' he said, the tears coursing each other down his cheeks as he spoke. 'I vill not *encore* zis 'orreeble brute *montez*: 'e 'ave 'arf destroy me *déjà*. Nevare vill I on 'is back get; 'e 'ave blow me on ze eye and also 'e 'ave blow my nose. I vill go 'ome.' So a melancholy procession was formed, and marched back to Prosper Farm, consisting of the recaptured horse, led by a labourer, followed by the disconsolate Gallic sportsman, the rear being brought up by a knot of loafers who had come to see the hounds throw off.

Grace Maxwell had witnessed the whole scene from one of the top windows of the house, and with her heart touched at the thought that, perchance, their guest might be hurt, and also feeling for what she thought (however, erroneously), would be a keen disappointment to him in losing the run, she hurried down to the door to offer whatever assistance she could.

The elegant Hippolyte was all smiles in a moment. For-

getting his muddy face, he bent over her hand, gallantly, and kissed it; then, equally oblivious of the damaged state of his attire, he seated himself beside his fair hostess and began to make violent love to her.

Now Grace possessed one attribute only, not of woman-kind in general. She was an incorrigible practical joker; therefore it was, that although she openly laughed at the pretensions of M. Fleury, she could not resist the temptation of letting him run on, and rather giving him to understand that his attentions were grateful to her.

'Ah, mademoiselle!' he cried, as he retained possession of the hand he had just kissed; 'you are too beautiful! you are too sympathétique! Vy do you continue to live in zis so *triste*—ow you call it?—dull country place. Vy you do not come to Paris, Venice, even your dull and dirty Londres? Zese muddy lanes are not for you. *Ah, ma chère* G-r-r-race! vill you to me be ze *bel' Ange*, ze—ze guiding moon—*non*, ze guiding star! Fly wis me before zey com' in from ze 'unting!'

Grace, with a great effort, stifled the laughter that almost broke from her in spite of herself, and said—

'Oh, M. Fleury, I have known you so short a time——'

'Nevare mind, I forgive zat. We will be marry at your 'Registry Office for Servants.' I 'ave seen it written up in *Londres, à plusieurs places!* Vill you, on ze eve of your *jour de Noël*, e-slope—vat you call it?—wis me, and be my bridal, *mais non*, mine bridegrooms, I mean. Only zay you vill be at ze gate of ze Parc, at four o'clock zat day, and you make of me ze 'appiest of shentlemens. Zay you will be at ze Parc gate—ah! I 'ear you fazer commin in—zay, *vite*, you vill be——'

'Oh, as far as that goes, yes, I will be at the Park gate then. Now go, go quickly. My father's coming in.'

With a triumphant grin, and a grimace that might have been indicative of anything, from railway accidents downwards, M. Hippolyte betook himself from the room by one door, just as Honest John entered it by the other.

The farmer was radiant. His horse had carried him well throughout the run, and despite his seventy winters, he had ridden without a doubt, or even a momentary tremor of the hand, over the biggest places they had met with in the course of a brilliant forty minutes' gallop, without a check. As he patted his handsome daughter on the shoulder, he said, with a laugh, 'Ah, my dear, every season I say it's to be the last, but while I

keep my health, I suppose I shall go on hunting. Seth and Sam have gone on with them to draw for a second fox, but old fellows like me should come home after the first run. Where's our French friend? I missed him almost as soon as we got away.'

'Oh, he's back already. Had a tumble at the ditch, down by the ten acres, but hasn't got a scratch. The horse jumped it clean—hedge and all, and he's safe in the stable now—not hurt a bit, of course.'

That night, at dinner, the talk was naturally of the day's gallop, and the two young Americans were describing, in glowing terms, their experiences in this, to them, novel sport. Seth and Sam had each embraced Mother Earth, on more than one occasion, during the spin, but this only rendered them the keener, and at the death of their game, good fox, they were well up, considering the inevitable loss of time that resulted from their tumbles. Sam said—

'Uncle John—seems to me this is the country for sport. Our trotting matches and La Crosse, and base-ball, and all the rest of it, are very well in their way, but if you want something that'll just make you feel like a bottle of ginger beer, with an extra high-pressure double-distilled dynamo inside of it, why you must come right here to this island, and hunt!'

'So you must, my boy, so you must!' replied the old man heartily, secretly longing to hug Sam for such truly British sentiments.

'I'll not go back on Sam in this matter, I guess,' coincided Seth, laughing. 'What say you, Mister Flowery?'

'*Moi*, I prefare ze sports of my country—of France,' replied the gentleman addressed. 'We 'ave ze *tir aux pigeons*, ze fencing, ze pistol practice. You 'ave *le boxe* and your fogs 'unt. *Je n'aime pas beaucoup la chasse!*'

'Well, boys, fill your glasses and drink with me. Success to fox-hunting. May it live as long as men have stout hearts and clear consciences!'

'Fox-hunting!' cried everybody, and the toast was drunk right heartily.

'Now, Monsieur, you must reply on behalf of the sport,' said his host.

A clatter of fork handles and then M. Hippolyte, with what was intended for a languishing glance in the direction of Grace rose to reply,—

'Ladies *et Messieurs*. *Je vous prie*—'

'English, English!' cried the company, whilst Seth drily remarked that they 'didn't understand Italian.'

The speaker resumed: 'I am spoken to return ze toast, but I 'ave no toast to return. Ze honeur of ze 'unt 'ave not been to me to-day, but *autre jour peut-être*—ah, pardon; I relapse into my own tongue again. I 'ave fallen right on my nose and 'ave break my *pincenez*. I 'ave burst off some *boutons* of my braces, I 'ave plaster ze back of myself *avec* ze mud, and ven my 'orse make for himselfs ze intention of over-going ze jomp, I did feel very frightful—no, frighten. *Eh, bien*, I say, I vill now go 'ome, I 'ave done ze 'unt. 'Ow st-r-r-range, I say to myselfs, zat ze ladies 'unt 'ere, too! Ah, ze ladies! zare beauty in zis countree ees so great, zat ven I see dem, I fall from ze bottom of the stairs to ze top!' (Great applause.) '*Moi*, I am vhat you calls a lady-like man. I like ze ladies. Zay are ze gas in ze soda-watare bottel—ze oasis of ze desert. I vill not detain myself for addressing you at any longer length, but say I am ver' 'appy at ze honour I 'ave done you alls;' and M. Fleury resumed his seat amid much cheering.

Two days later, the volatile Frenchman appeared at luncheon, in costume of an extra resplendent kind. It was Christmas Eve, and their party was to be further augmented by the arrival from London, of some old friends who were to spend the season of rejoicing at Prosper Farm. Hippolyte was in the highest spirits, and his attentions to Grace were almost embarrassing. Early in the afternoon, he went out of the house by the garden door, walking rapidly over the lawn and entering the park, where he was soon lost to view.

At a quarter to four exactly, Grace Maxwell left the house, attired simply in her walking dress, and leisurely strolled down to the park gate.

As the old clock, above the stables, chimed the hour, a well-muffled-up form stepped, lightly, out of a post-chaise, waiting in the road outside the Park, and walked towards the low portal in the moss-grown red-brick wall. A moment later, and the door was quickly, but softly, opened; there was a flutter of female drapery, and with an especially killing grimace and a low bow, M. Hippolyte Fleury hurried the be-shawled and hooded figure into the post-chaise; the postillions quickly had their horses going, and away they sped at full fourteen miles an hour, the Frenchman being too much occupied in giving directions to

and urging on the riders, to pay any attention, at first, to his charge.

About two miles had thus been traversed, when Hippolyte turned to his companion, and with an air of great *empressement*, implanted half-a-dozen kisses on the hand nearest him. This producing no response, he took the hand within his own delicately gloved one, placed his arm round the waist and—promptly got his hat knocked off, for his pains!

To say that M. Fleury was struck dumb by this cavalierlike treatment, entirely fails to convey what his real state of mind was. He only gasped, as the 'lady' raised a heavy veil, and disclosed the features of Seth Maxwell, his left eyelid so deflected that the vulgar might have been tempted to describe it as a wink.

'Say, Mister Flowery,' he began, slowly drawing out a cigar-case from his pocket, and lighting a huge Laranaga, 'don't you think we may as well turn back and go home? Seems to me sorter chilly h'yar, do you know.'

'*Lâche!*' screamed the other, livid with rage, and raising his hand to strike the young American. Quick as a flash of light, the Frenchman's wrist was encircled in a grip of iron; then, as the hand dropped powerless, Seth resumed, in perfectly cool, deliberate tones—

'Guess you'd better take on a job nearer your size than that. No, Hippo-lyte, sir, I wasn't reared under a glass case, nor brought up on yellow-backed novels and Cognac. If I did hit you, I reckon my first 'ud go right through and come out the other side of the section. Take it quietly—the game's up. We've got the bulge on you this time. Y'see, cousin Grace—no, don't you say anything against her, or you might possibly run your eye up against my fist—cousin Grace is fond of a joke; she asked me to help her in this one, and so here we are! Well, 'all's fair in love and war,' they say. Shake hands, be friends again, and come right back now. We'll not say a word to anyone about it, and we'll eat our Christmas dinner together, in peace and charity with everybody. What say you?'

M. Fleury was a man of the world; he grasped the situation in a trice. On the one hand he saw that, if he maintained his dignity and nursed his wrath, he would have all to lose, and worse still, his escapade and fiasco would be published and laughed over by every one at Prosper Farm; on the other, by going quietly back, swallowing the pill, and putting his pride in

his pocket, only Grace—but this was a very strong ‘only’—and Seth would be any the wiser, and furthermore, he would still be able to stay on, in his comfortable quarters until the end of the week, when he would depart for his ‘belle France,’ never to return to ‘perfidious Albion’ any more. So, gulping down his disgust with that happy refuge of his countrymen, a shrug of the shoulders, he merely said, ‘*Bien, j’accepte.*’

M. Fleury paid the postboys, and with Seth, re-entered the park by the same gate from which they had so recently issued. Here the American slipped off his skirt, shawl and bonnet, bundled them up under his arm, and together the two men passed into the house.

‘Come along, boys and girls!’ called the voice of jolly old John, late that night, ‘this is Christmas Eve, and for forty years I’ve never missed the bowl of punch. Now that I’ve friends from France and America, I’m not going to miss it to-night, so come in here; the odour tells you which room it’s in, and the brew is undeniable. Grace, you shall hold the ladle and deal out the first glass. Who’s it going to? Ah, Fleury my boy, you’re the lucky man!’—for Grace had selected the crestfallen Frenchman, with her woman’s tact and kindness, for the honour—‘Hark! there are the bells. Let’s drink to Father Christmas! May he heal all wounds, make friends of enemies, and bring us joy and peace, throughout the world!’

SENSATIONAL CRICKET IN 1892.

By SOMERVILLE GIBNEY.

AT length, after long and patient waiting, a change has come, and I can record a better season in point of weather than that of last year. Up to the commencement of this one we have had three wet seasons running, and each one worse than its predecessor. Not that this last one has been faultless, for we had a spell of cold and rain in July that was terribly trying both to players and spectators alike; but taken as a whole the clerk of the weather has shewn signs of relenting, and allowing us to have once more seasons such as all true lovers of our national summer game would wish to have. This year there were 72 first-class county matches played, and of these 54 were brought to a definite conclusion.

Many of the drawn games took place during the spell of wet in August which I have mentioned, while some of the others occurred just at the end of the season, when unsettled weather may be looked for. And the improvement in the weather has naturally caused an improvement in the scores, for whereas in 1891 the average per wicket in the first-class county matches was 16·83, this year it has risen to 19·24. The counties which have claimed most attention during the past season have undoubtedly been Surrey, Notts, and Somerset. The first because of their steadiness and pluck all through, and the admirable way in which they have been captained by Mr. J. Shuter, a combination of incidents which, in spite of their two-fold defeat at the hands of Notts, has again placed them first for the championship; Notts because of the lamentable manner in which they fell to pieces at the end of the season after commencing so well, for until their match with Somerset on the 18th, 19th, and 20th of August, they were unbeaten, but from that time their troubles commenced, and the members of the team playing an individual rather than a combined game, their final record shewed two losses and four drawn games, which brought them down to the second place; and Somerset because, though being the youngest of the counties, they have, chiefly through the batting of Hewett and L. C. Palaret, risen to the third place; and it may here be noted that Hewett is the only batsman who has scored 1,000 runs in the championship matches this season. There have been a great many large scores, but this year I have not observed any over 600, though in several instances only on account of the *closure* rule being put in force. The nearest to 600 was the 592 made by Somersetshire against Yorks, on the 25th, 26th, and 27th of August, when L. Palaret made 146, Hewett 201, and W. C. Hedley 102, and the first wicket fell for 346 establishing a record, the previous best having been 283 made by W. G. Grace and B. B. Cooper at the Oval in 1869, when playing for Gentlemen of the South *v.* Players of the South; but almost immediately afterwards came another record, though not for first class matches, when on the 31st of August, at Devonshire Park, S. Coleman scored 209 and P. Coles 247 not out, making 472 for one wicket, against G. W. Morrison's 11. The previous best in this class was 470 for no wicket made by L. Wilson 246 not out, and W. G. Wyld 203 not out, for Beckenham *v.* Bexley on the 1st of August, 1885; and it is the second longest partnership, the best being 605 for the second

wicket by G. F. Vernon and A. H. Trevor for Orleans Club *v.* Rickling Green in 1882. The palm for run-making must be given this year to the match played on the 12th and 13th of August between Free Foresters and A. P. Lucas' Eleven, when the former scored 521 (F. Ingram 130 and H. Gibson 115), and the latter 562 for five wickets (L. Gay 112, F. Phillips 120, F.E. Rowe 107 not out, and H.M. Taberer 114), making altogether six centuries in an innings and a half. 1892 will always be remembered for Scott's 224 made in 6 hours and 40 minutes for Middlesex *v.* Gloucester on the 9th of June, and when he ought to have been run out before he scored. Yorkshire has piled up runs several times this year, and in the week ending the 9th of July they twice made over 500, though not against first-class counties; on the 4th and 5th they made 516 against Staffordshire 74 and 157, and on the 7th, 8th, and 9th they made 509 for six wickets against Leicester's 120; in this match Peel put together 226 not out. There was also some tall scoring on the 11th and 12th of July, in the match Gentlemen of the M.C.C. *v.* Grange Club, Edinburgh, when for the latter A. G. Asher made 215 and R. Johnson 163-328 before they were parted; altogether 557 for nine wickets, to which M.C.C. replied with 206 for three wickets. On the 25th and 26th of July an Eleven of Kent scored heavily against Gentlemen of Surbiton, making 545 for five wickets (S. Cattle 200, G. G. Hearne 162 not out, and Captain G. Hamilton 103 not out), their opponents only totalling 192. And it is satisfactory to find that big scores have not been confined to men alone, but that the younger players at school, from among whom we shall subsequently draw some of our county representatives, have also been doing well, as witness the match Wellingborough Grammar School *v.* Rushden on the 21st of May, when the boys scored 530 for five wickets (J. B. Challen 102, A. G. Henfrey 174. Challen had only just a week previously made 101 for his School against Leicester). And when Winchester College played I. Zingari on the 31st of May, and scored 290 for six wickets, J. R. Mason making 112 and H. D. G. Leveson-Gower 116. These two became associated at 13 and for two-and-a-half hours they cracked away merrily, adding 238, nearly every one of which was run out; the last eighty only took 30 minutes making. In the Rugby and Marlborough match this year the latter's score of 432 (W. Mortimer 106, P. R. Creed 211) proved the biggest ever made at Lord's in either a Public School or Varsity match. Probably the biggest individual score among the boys

was the 229 made by G. O. Smith for Charterhouse when playing Westminster on the 24th and 25th of June. Turning again to cricket generally, there has been some extraordinary rapid scoring as well as big hitting during the past season; the Oxford Varsity Eleven *v.* Next Sixteen on the 12th, 13th, and 14th of May, is a case in point. The Eleven 303, C. B. Fry 105 (two sixes, ten fours, one three, seven twos); Next Sixteen 403 (R. H. Raphael 101 made in 55 minutes). On the 4th of June Mr. F. Atkinson for Sunninghill *v.* St. Ann's Heath made 213 not out, in 2½ hours, and on the 23rd of June Gentlemen of M.C.C. in the second innings against Royal Artillery made 147 in an hour, and won the match. On the 11th June the Royal Naval College made 267 for four wickets and declared their innings closed, upon which their opponents, the Royal Navy, put their shoulders to the wheel and made 204 for five wickets, the last forty-five of which were made in 10 minutes. The Royal Navy again distinguished themselves in this line on the 25th of June, when playing the Yorkshire Regiment, the latter made 236 for nine wickets, and Royal Navy made 188 for three in 1 hour 17 minutes, the last ninety-five of which were made in half an hour. And again on the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd of July, in the Somerset and Sussex match there was rapid scoring, for in the former's second innings the first 35 minutes produced eighty-two runs, and the 100 was made in 48. Among big scores I must not omit the Sussex and Kent match on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of August, when G. Brann made 105 and 101, a feat only once previously performed in first-class cricket by W. G. Grace. In this match Humphrey was at the wickets 80 minutes without scoring, but he saved his side from defeat. There have been as usual some close finishes commencing with the Oxford Varsity and Lancashire match on the 26th and 27th of May, when the former won by seven runs. On the 20th, 21st, and 22nd of June there were two matches taking place, both of which ended excitingly, the first, Middlesex *v.* Notts, in this Shrewsbury made 212 and Stoddart 2 and 130. Notts had made 466 and Middlesex 195, and on the third day, with half an hour to play, they had still five wickets to fall, and their score had reached 244; then Sherwin, the wicket-keeper, was allowed to try his hand with the ball (I never remember him bowling previously), and in his first over he bowled Webb, who had made thirty-two, and with Stoddart had put on ninety-five. Then Stoddart was out l.b.w. and eventually, at 4 minutes to time, Notts won by an

innings and fourteen runs. In the second match, Surrey *v.* Yorkshire, Surrey made 151, Yorkshire answered with eighty-seven, then, when Surrey had made 81 for seven wickets, Shuter closed the innings, leaving Yorkshire to get 146 runs or stay at the wicket 2 hours and 5 minutes, but within 3 minutes of time they were all out, defeated by seventeen runs. Oxford had another close finish on the 25th of June, when they defeated Sussex by ten runs. There have not been so many small scores this past season as usual, but I have noted some, and among them the Crystal Palace and St. Bartholomew's Hospital match on the 12th of May, when the latter made twenty! The first five batsmen made nothing, then came two sevens, and the remaining four made nothing, there were six byes. Again, the M.C.C. and Ground *v.* Kent on the 26th and 27th May, was remarkable in this unpleasant way, for in Kent's second innings the last five batsmen did not make a run, and the last seven only seven among them. Kent seventy-seven and seventy-seven, M.C.C. and Ground 207. Seven is truly a potent number, at any rate in this case it was. And on the same dates Warwickshire made 119 and twenty-three! against Surrey's 201. The 2nd July brought a curiosity to light, although only in a minor match, Walton-on-Trent *v.* Alrewas, the former won, making sixty-nine and getting Alrewas out for four; F. Durant took seven wickets in three overs and two balls for no runs, and six wickets fell before a run was scored. On Tuesday, the 8th of August, Lancashire defeated Somersetshire in one day; there had been no play on the Monday owing to rain. Somerset eighty-eight and fifty-eight, Lancashire 116 and thirty-two for two wickets; the last case of a first-class match ending in one day was when Surrey beat Lancashire at Old Trafford in 1888. When Hythe played the K.D.G.'s on the 19th of August they made 165 to the latter's thirteen. But perhaps the most sensational performance, though only in a minor match, was that which took place during the week ending the 6th of August, when Willingham played Trin. Coll. Camb. Servants. The latter made 101 to which Willingham answered with eighty-nine. Then Trinity Servants were all out for two, leaving Willingham fifteen to get in twelve minutes. They could not manage this, and when time was up had lost six wickets for seven runs. There have also been some sensations in the bowling line; on the 16th of May, playing for Yorkshire *v.* M.C.C., Fletcher, when six wickets were down for 143, finished off the innings for the addition of one run, by

bowling Napier, and then, with three balls, the last of one over, and the first two of the next, dismissing the remaining batsmen, getting Greson caught at the wicket, and bowling Board and Burton; and on the same date, playing for Essex *v.* Surrey, Kortright dismissed Mr. Key, Brockwell, and Wood in four balls. On the 28th May the Rev. E. B. Cotton, for Reigate Hill, took nine Leatherhead wickets for twenty-six runs, the last seven being taken in twelve balls for three runs. On the 11th of June Pittaway, playing for Wyley C.C., Coventry, against Richardson's C.C., Leicester, sent down six overs, six maidens, no runs, seven wickets. Kortright did another good piece of bowling when playing for Hythe *v.* Dover Garrison on the 29th of July, for he took eight wickets for three runs, his last five balls securing five wickets. Here are one or two sensational items under the head of bowling. The first pair of spectacles in first-class cricket this year was made by C. Foley, for M.C.C. *v.* Yorkshire on the 16th of May. Webb made another in Middlesex *v.* Surrey on the 12th and 13th of August, being bowled first ball each innings. The first two balls in the Eton and Harrow match on the 8th and 9th July, secured two of Harrow's wickets. And now, in conclusion, I must give one or two curiosities which have occurred this season. On the 10th of May, Watson, playing for Lancashire *v.* M.C.C. at Lord's, hit a ball to square leg from nearly the centre of the ground and it pitched on to the roof of the grand stand, counting six. At the commencement of the Cambridge Varsity season H. R. Bromley-Davenport was never once out until the end of his fifth innings. On the 16th of May, playing for Lord Sheffield's Eleven *v.* England, M. Read hit a ball hard back to the bowler, J. T. Hearne, from whose hands it bounced into those of Martin at mid-on, who held it. W. R. Jenkins records in "The Field" of the 4th of June a curious catch; he was fielding point when a hard cut came to him so quickly he had only time to put up his hand to save his face, when the ball glanced from the tip of his first finger on to the top of his forehead, and thence into the hands of cover-point; this is followed by another one mentioned in the same paper by F. W. Dickson, the ball in this case struck point's knee, and rebounded into the wicket-keeper's hands—he was standing 8 or 10 yards behind the wicket. A very similar case occurred in the Surrey and Middlesex match on the 13th of June, when O'Brien cut a ball hard on to the wicket-keeper's (A. F. Clarke) knee, whence it bounded into the hands of M.

Read who was standing at third-man. In the Notts and Yorkshire match, on the 27th and 28th June, A. Sellars played a ball into Sherwin's pads, who took it out, and Sellars lost his wicket, caught Sherwin. On the same dates in Surrey v. Gloucestershire, Clarke having hurt his hand keeping wicket for the former, had to give up the gloves to Abel, and then W. G. Grace suggested that Watts, who was fielding as substitute, should keep wicket, this he did, and caught *three*. In the Notts and Kent match on the 4th, 5th, and 6th of August, there was a funny instance of plot and counter-plot unusual in cricket; Notts had made 226, and Kent 145, when Patterson, the Kent Captain, called to Wright, the last man man in, and held a conversation with him, evidently instructing him to get out so that they might follow their innings, as the wicket just then was playing well. But Attewell bowled his next ball wide to leg, and it went for four, so the follow on was saved. When Notts played Somerset on the 18th, 19th, and 20th of August, they suffered their first defeat of the season, a curious thing also happened, Hedley hit a ball to mid-off, and thinking it would be returned to the bowler, stood out of his ground, but Shacklock threw it to the wicket-keeper, and Hedley's wicket was down before he knew his danger. Tyler bowled in the second innings of Notts, 14 overs, two maidens, thirty-three runs, nine wickets. In the second Notts and Surrey match on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of August there was the largest attendance ever known at a cricket-match, 72,003 persons attending the three days; this was the first occasion for ten years on which Notts has beaten Surrey twice in one season. And now I have done, and I think any one who has had the patience to peruse this article will be inclined to admit that 1892 has furnished quite as much sensation on the pitch as any of its predecessors.

A NOTABLE EXPERIMENT.

By 'DOVEDALE'



OUR Squire had a foxhound, Pathfinder by name,
Whose nose was unerring, whose running was game.
Whene'er in the March winds the scent failed to lie,
If Pathfinder opened the others would fly,
And soon with his leading would own to the scent,
Joy reigned 'mongst the riders as onward they went

With hope in each breast of soon running to view,
 Such faith had the field in this champion true.
 Quoth Raynham the huntsman, 'That note I would follow,
 Aye, ten times as soon as a yokel's "View, Holloa!"'

His form was a model; oft artists came down
 To place him on canvas for sportsmen in 'town.'
 His colour was perfect, with plenty of tan;
 We hadn't a hound with the Vernon that ran
 More round in the foot, while 'twas equally clear
 His ribs would have been no disgrace to a deer.
 When not on the quest he aye carried his head
 As proudly as barons when armies they led;
 His chest, broad and massive, gave proof of his power,
 His legs were as straight and as firm as a tower.

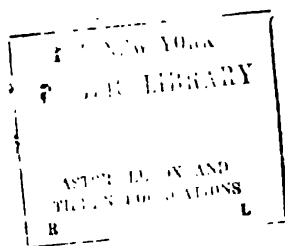
So he was the joy of the old Vernon chase,
 The fleetest and truest of all the great race
 That sprang from the Derbyshire crack Runnymede,
 Of whom in the old sporting annals you read,
 For you'll recollect that he lived in a day
 Some ages before the Meltonian sway.
 The Vernon were busy with hound and with horn
 For eighty long years 'ere the 'jovial Quorn'
 Drew into their country the cream of the riders,
 And haughtily voted all others outsiders.

But search through the lines of the old minstrel's lays,
 You'll find them as loud in staunch Runnymede's praise
 As ever was bard o'er Great Rallywood's strain,
 The Yarborough loss and the 'Belvoir Boys' gain,
 Two huntsmen at Brocklesby carried the sway
 While Goodall was getting that hero away.
 His triumphs venatic are nearer our time,
 And furnish more popular theme for our rhyme;
 To men who have not in their ranks a believer
 In aught but the Quorndon, the Cottesmore, and Belvoir.

Well, Pathfinder, holding the premier place
 By all men's consent in this wonderful race,
 The masters and huntsmen continued to try
 This marvellous hound from the Vernon to buy;
 Though large were their offers, the bidders were told
 A hound like our hero was better than gold.
 The Squire oft declared he could ne'er muster heart
 From such a staunch finder and runner to part;
 As sure as a gun though at end of the season,
 His growls were terrific, and not without reason.



"He defied the whole field"



Though 'walking' is like unto training a child,
On one point poor Pathfinder's conduct was wild;
When sent as a puppy to Appleton Grange,
The farmer allowed him too widely to range.
He soon failed the bounds of the farmstead to keep,
Fell into bad habits, and went for the sheep.
The habit remained, and in spite of the thong,
Got stronger and stronger as time went along;
He sampled the flocks on each farm like a glutton,
The claims on 'The Vernon' were awful for mutton.

These bills grew too large for our Derbyshire Squire,
Till one day afield he exclaimed in his ire,
The hound may be good, but it's all very well,
In spite of his merits Pathfinder I'll sell.
'No; doant thee,' cries one of the farmers; 'I know
A method invented in days long ago,
And one that I've tried: it is quick and it's sure
A hound of his liking for mutton to cure—
Just tie him right fast to the horns of old Dutton,
And leave them all night—that will wean him from mutton.

They tied him to Dutton, the farmer's old ram,
He'd bought him at Horncastle Fair as a lamb;
These Lincolnshire sheep are both weighty and strong,
Our hero was left with him all the night long.
The farmer was mightily sure of his plan,
'He'll teach him his manners, or I'm not a man.'
Next morn came the Squire for the news of the fight,
'Well, Bolder, how went it? I hope you were right;'
'Alas, Squire, though Dutton was bold, he was bolder—
Old Pathfinder's killed him and supped off his shoulder!'

MELTONIANA.

By 'TOM MARKLAND.'

IN glancing down the list of hunting fixtures in the *Sporting Life* of November 2nd, 1891, I sadly noted (in common with many a 'Belvoir Boy') the absence of the Saturday meet of the Duke of Rutland's hounds. Of course it had been announced in the Press, that the premier pack would henceforth run but four days a week, but we hoped that ere the opening of the hunting season a way

would be found to continue the Waltham and Stonesby meets, and rattle the denizens of Goadby Gorse, Stonesby Ashes, Freeby Wood, Burbidge's Covert, and Melton Spinneys over the capital portion of the ducal territories that lies round the northern side of the metropolis, but we were doomed to disappointment, and the Melton men will now be dependent for Saturday's sport on the Cottesmore meets, such as Wild's Lodge and Leesthorpe. My thoughts then went back to the past history of the Belvoir, from the time that Shawe carried the horn, till Frank Gillard's day. From some old notes of my father's and my grandfather's, I am enabled to look back into the last century, to 1791, when Mr. Newman was at the head of affairs. The hounds were much slower in those days, and the lands indifferently drained, but it was wonderful what an amount of sport they managed to enjoy in spite of all drawbacks. There is one note of a run from Coston over to Waltham-le-Wolds, then with a sharp turn to the left down to Thorpe Arnold, the fox was making for nobody knows where, probably even the fox himself, was only trusting to the chapter of accidents, for Burbidge's Covert was not in existence, but they rolled him over in the George's Ground, which settled all further difficulties. This was their first run that day, and a halt was called for refreshment, before recommencing operations, in the bye-lane which runs between Clayton's and Scorrors farms. Mr. Newman, with his feet out of the stirrups, was going for the sandwiches in good style, when the occupant of the neighbouring farm came up to him and said, 'Excuse me, your Grace, but would you like a glass of sherry along with that?'

'Thank you very much,' replied Newman, 'I have some, but although we grow very good strawberries and I take care to get my share of them, I never got a chance of the leaves.'

'Whatever did he mean,' said the farmer, after the hunt had gone, 'I should think he might be satisfied with the berries, without wanting the leaves as well.'

In the note my grandfather has called this farmer 'Billy,' but judging from the tomb-stones in the old church I expect he was one of the Allsops who held the farm now tenanted by Mr. Scorrors, for many years.

Shawe was kennel-huntsman for eleven seasons, giving place to Goosey, the same year that Assheton Smith left the Quorn, and from the notes, I gather that he did wonderfully good work, for Yarborough Rallywood was not pupped till long after, and

the Cottesmore were superior in hounds, besides having a better scenting country.

They lost a fox once at the 'catch bar' in front of the famous Moody Burbidge's house. The fox went through the bar, and the toll-man, who was an old Peninsular hero, promptly locked the gate. Up came the horsemen and hounds, and when they found the course barred, one or two jumped the toll-bar, but Jordan, (that is the name of the toll-keeper, as far as I can make it out), collared one of the hounds and flung it into his room, then snatching up a blunderbuss, he defied the whole field. 'You may jump the gate,' said he, 'But I'll be d——d if you get that hound till you give me a brace of yellow-boys.'

'Somebody! give the fellow his two pounds,' shouted Shawe, 'the scent won't lie on this lane.'

One of the hunt promptly produced the required sum, and the gate was thrown open and the hound released, but they could make nothing of it, though one or two hounds whimpered behind the Vicarage.

Any young sportsman who has not already perused *Silk and Scarlet*, will find about page 50 some additional interesting reminiscences of Shawe, Will Head, and Will Derry.

Then for twenty-six years, Goosey, whose record is only second to Will Goodall's, ruled the roast at Belvoir. They both lie in Knipton Churchyard, almost within hearing of the morning clamours when the forty odd couples doomed to be left at home are baying with impatience to join in the fray.

There is a story of a naval man who annoyed Goosey by his reckless manner of riding. They were running down the lane by White Lodge one day, and of course they were hemmed in by the banks, so as the old salt was exceedingly devious, and as forward as usual, there was no getting past him. A lot of the riders were using some strong language when Goosey shouted, 'Let him go, gentlemen. That gate's always locked, and he'll smash the top rail as sure as fate.' Smash it he did, and Goosey said, 'There, I told you so. That's the only time he's been any use in the hunting field.' There was a good deal of haw-hawing as they cleared the now *four*-barred gate. But the sailor turned the tables on some of them one afternoon when they were straddling up the 'Beast Market,' (now Sherard Street). Every one who has witnessed the comical procession must wonder that such artists as Caldecott didn't get hold of the subject, and when they were nearing the market-place on their way to the 'George

and the Bell,' the sailor struck an attitude, and called them 'sons of sea-cooks.' 'One would think the street was a deck, and a heavy gale on. You laughed at me for smashing the taffrail, I can laugh at you fellows now, you can't keep from rolling even in a dead calm.'

Another notice of Goosey is a memorandum—'Always make a back cast if Ranger is the leading hound.' This Ranger must have been a fast and careless gentleman, and consequently prone to over-run the scent, for Goosey was averse to back casts. Under Lord Forester's reign, the famous Will Goodall comes on the scene, and so much has been written about him that there is little left to tell. It was a wonder he didn't come to grief sooner than he did, for Lord Forester and Will never thought it too late, or the light too bad, to have another draw. His favourite hunter was Catch-me-who-can, but he dropped on a good one cheap in Mellum. It was in the cub-hunting season, and Will was on his way to arrange about earth-stopping and other things on the Melton side, when he saw Joe Love, a farmer, who had the squire's land after him, I mean Squire Norman. Joseph was trying this mare at fences, but he didn't get on very well, for when he felt inclined to go, the mare didn't, and *vice versa*, but Goodall's practised eye could discern the making of a good hunter in Mellum, so seizing the opportunity, he remarked, 'You'll never get that mare over a four-foot stile.' The upshot of the affair was that Will got the mare for thirty pounds. When afterwards, Will was taking everything before him on Mellum, Joe remarked on one occasion that he seemed to have conceived a wrong notion of the mare.

'Not at all,' replied Will.

'But you said I should never get her over a four-foot stile.'

'True,' cried Goodall, with a laugh; 'but I didn't say she couldn't be got over.'

To what tune Will reimbursed himself over that deal I never knew, but I have heard him say she was the third best mount he ever rode, so he must have been a long way on the right side of the hedge. Judgment in horse-flesh seems to run in the Goodall family. There is one living now, just by the church at Melton, in the house that once belonged to Anne of Cleves, and he would take some beating in a bargain of the sort, but he has had the advantage of a full course of education at the Royal Veterinary College, which Will had not. No man ever carried a horn who had more control of his hounds, a power which gave

him a great advantage in lifting them. Lord Forester once remarked at the Belvoir dinner-table, that they had had a good day's *riding*.

'Capital hunting, Forester,' replied one of the guests; 'never enjoyed a day more in my life.'

'What do you think of Goodall's lifting and casting?'

'Simply perfect; one would think he had arranged it all with the fox over-night.'

'Foxes are no object to Will,' replied Forester. 'He gets one when he can, but there's no trotting from covert to covert with Will, even when he does draw blank.'

Though the '57 run was undoubtedly the finest the Belvoir ever enjoyed, it was nearly rivalled by the Sproxtton Thorns run in Goosey's days, and allowing for the difference in the packs at the two epochs, perhaps the run to Greetham, sixteen miles, point to point, followed by a second with the same fox, the very next day, to Pickworth Wood, four miles beyond Greetham, should be considered as meritorious an achievement as the other. Goosey went very reluctantly to the Thorns from the Croxton meet on the second day, fearing they might chop the run fox, but as I remarked above, he ran farther than ever. That was truly a stout fox, but looking over these notes I find one with which I fail entirely to agree. 'Foxes had more miles to travel for their provender before birds were reared, and they had only to go to the nearest covert and help themselves to a "longtail." This necessarily gave the fox a better training, and in addition, the hounds were not of the same quality. The pace of the Belvoir increased in a very marked degree after the importation from the Brocklesby and Sir Tatton Sykes' kennels, but in those days neither Tristram nor Rallywood had put their mark on the 'Bright Belvoir Tan.' The Yorkshire stallion hound gave wind to the pack, and Rallywood nose, whereby mainly, the pack attained to its present acknowledged perfection.

The huntsmen of those days had a right to be proud of the magnificent runs they provided for the field; indeed, the men who rode in that country were not likely to express themselves as they did, in terms of entire satisfaction, had it been otherwise; but whoever has seen the pack within the last decade must subscribe to my opinion, that they never could have been better, though there might be odd hounds that would compare favourably with the pick of the modern 'tan.'

Speaking of these now bygone Saturday meets, the laggards

had a fearful disappointment one Saturday when the rendezvous was Waltham. They always meet in Rippin's paddock (it wouldn't be Rippin's then), but they generally waited twenty minutes or so for the tail of the Melton contingent. Goodall was chatting with one of the gentlemen, and the whips were riding slowly about, occasionally flicking a hound back into the pack in a desultory way, when suddenly a dark old dog fox emerged from the farm buildings, and away went the pack on his line. 'Let them go,' cries Forester; 'we'll give those feather-bed sportsmen a lesson.' So accordingly, away swept the whole field, and when some half-dozen of the late birds arrived, they found no other signs of the meet but the hoof-marks in the mud. 'By Jove!' cries one, pulling out his hunting-card, 'Saturday's Waltham; this *is* Saturday, isn't it, you fellows?'

His friends were unanimous in declaring that it *was* Saturday, but one of them, a wag, tried to explain matters. 'The fact is,' said he, 'you started too soon, as usual. The hounds will be here, if you have patience, and I'll give you a cigar.'

This elicited roars of laughter, but the disappointed one wasn't to be deceived in that fashion.

'Look here,' he replied, pointing to the hoof-marks; 'I've been in America, and know fresh spoor; Will Goodall has given us the slip. I might exercise patience, as you say, for about a fortnight, and smoke all the cigars in your case, Walter, but meantime, I vote we try to chop in. Here you! (to a yokel) can you tell us which way they went?'

'Ah! That I can, rightly, sir. The old fox sneaked into that shed last night, and I see'd him, so I shut the door, and kept him snug till the hounds come this morning.'

'Which way did he go?'

'I can't rightly think,' replied Hodge, scratching his head as if trying to recollect. 'You see I'm so bothered about where to get a fat pig from, we've well-nigh eaten all our bacon.'

'Oh! hang you and your pig, *we'll* buy you a pig, if you only put us on the right track.'

'Thank you, Captain, I think I *can* remember, now the pig's off my mind. They went as straight for Coston as hounds could go, as far as I see'd 'em; and I believe that fox come from Coston covert. He's the blackest like, as ever I see'd about here, that's how I know him.'

A fiver was soon forthcoming, and off the little troop (who were mostly army men) rode in pursuit of the flying pack; but

they never caught them till after they had killed their first fox, and were drawing for an afternoon fox in "The Ashes."

'Hollo, Walter!'

'Hollo, Ned; where have you been?'

'Doing a little in the philanthropic line. Poor beggar wanted a pig, so we raised the wind for him. Isn't that correct, boys?'

'Right as the mail. True as the gospel,' and so on, was chorused from the whole crew.

'Oh! I see,' cries Bentham, of the 7th; 'you had to grease his mental machinery before he could tell you which way the fox had gone. Take my advice, Ned, and a leaf out of Hodge's book with it. It seems he was up a good deal earlier than you this morning, and got up awake too.'

These historic meets will not be allowed to lapse with the cessation of the Saturday hunt, however. They will arrange for a Waltham and Stonesby fixture on other days. Some part of the immense country must be partially neglected, but it will probably be on the Lincolnshire side that most of this will fall. We are nearing the close of the century, and as far as I can gather, this is the first season the Belvoir have hunted less than five days a week. Let us hope that before the twentieth century comes in, they may again finish up the week with the old Saturday meet on the Melton side.

Another note which is worthy of record in the archives pertaining to ancient sport, is one relating to a steeple-race, in which Mr. Bullivant of Sproxton, Mr. Day of Wymondham, and Mr. Frisby of Waltham, competed for one hundred guineas—whether this means three hundred guineas, or not, I can't gather from the note, which simply contains the words, 'Sweepstakes one hundred guineas.' By-the-bye, their term steeple-race was quite as *good*, and I think *better*, than ours, for what are we chasing? The Days are at Wymondham still, and the Bullivants and Frisbys are alive in our land, though not on the same acres. The yeoman families last long, even as tenants, but the Days are landowners.

The start was made soon after noon, from Womack's Lodge, and the course, simply round Woodwell Head, and back to starting point. The colours are given—Mr. Bullivant, orange; Mr. Day, crimson; and Mr. Frisby, sky-blue. The distance is about eight miles, and the country one of the biggest in the neighbourhood, though it might have been easier in those days, when many patches, which are now strongly fenced, were open,

the occupiers having their bounds defined by stones, for mowing purposes, and by the head of cattle they were entitled to turn out for grazing purposes.

My grandfather, in whose handwriting the note is, evidently fancied the Wymondham mount, the name of which is not mentioned. He says, 'Day's horse ought to have pounded Sentinel (Mr. Bullivant's horse), being better ribbed up and stronger in the hind-quarters, and he would have won, too, if he had got over that hand-gate—can't think why he tried to go through, when he had the powder to clear it.' They were riding nearly neck-and-neck up to that point, but it appears Mr. Day and his horse were both considerably shaken by the purl they got when the latter cannoned on the gate-post. Day picked himself up smartly enough, and was in the pigskin again as quickly as possible, but the Sproxton farmer had gained enough headway to give his rival a 'stern chase,' and eventually he won quite easily. Meantime there was a tremendous struggle for second place, between Mr. Day and the Waltham farmer, whose horse turned out to be superior to the expectation of the sportsmen. Frisby was a broad-shouldered man, and no light weight; Day made it up in height, so there was probably little difference in the merits of the horses, inasmuch as for the last half-mile they raced neck-and-neck for this second place; whether for the honour of the thing or for a sum of money set apart for the 'runner up,' to use a coursing term, I cannot say for certain, but my father, speaking from what he heard as a boy, soon after Waterloo, declares that the race was for *three* hundred guineas, and the second had fifty, thus saving half his stake. However, it seemed anybody's race for second, right up to the post, when Day, with a last spasmodic effort, won by half a neck. The time is given, —25 minutes, 32 seconds—and if the country was anything like what it is now, I think there are not many farmers who could get over the ground in the same time now-a-days.

Speaking of the Days reminds me of a very amusing incident that occurred on their land at Wymondham. The representative of the family, not being an enthusiastic gunner, had given the shooting right to Major Claggit, who had married the widow of the last Earl of Harborough, and whose estates joined Mr. Day's. The tenantry, however, had still the right to kill rabbits, and as these had increased to an undesirable extent on some rich pasture lands, for which a Mr. H——, who is now living in the neighbourhood, paid a good rent, he resolved to have a

grand day at the bunnies. To this end he invited some seven or eight acquaintances, who took the field with a formidable array of dogs, ferrets, &c. It was a misty morning, and they made a start by beating the 'Great Close' in line. This field was always swarming with hares, and, singular to relate, not one of Mr. H——'s guests could distinguish a hare from a rabbit, in consequence of the mist; but the queer part of it was, that they managed to send the shot straight, in spite of that same mist. There was a fine fusillade, and one of the dog-carts was well stored with the spoil, when Major Claggitt, at Stapleford, awoke to the fact that something desperate was being enacted at Wymondham; so he despatched an under-keeper to see what was going on. This functionary quickly appeared on the scene, and charged the party with shooting 'them long-eared uns.'

'Nonsense!' replied Mr. H——; 'we wouldn't touch them. Come along with us, then you'll see what we really do shoot.'

The keeper thought this both the best, and also the most politic thing to do, for visions of refreshments flitted before his mind. On they went, and, for about an hour, shooting was confined to the humble bunny; but a halt was then called, on the arrival of a messenger who had been despatched to Wymondham for a plentiful supply of malt liquor. This he delivered in two stone bottles, one containing a gallon, the other, half that quantity, and the latter was handed to two of Mr. H——'s labourers, who acted as beaters, to share with the keeper. These two so managed that the Stapleford man got the lion's share of the half-gallon, which had been fortified with a bottle of gin, with the result that on resuming the beat, the 'long-eared uns' lost their guardian, who toppled over into a wide ditch, where his fall was broken by brambles, making his visage rather unrepresentable on his return to Stapleford. You may easily imagine the number of hares in Wymondham parish would have shown a remarkable decrease, had statistics been available; but the farmer, who did not reside on the land over which we had been shooting, but at another farm of Mr. Day's, about nine miles off, considered that if his landlord did not want the shooting, he ought to give the first chance to his tenant; and nobody laughed more than Mr. Day, when the story leaked out, for H—— was too valuable a tenant to lose in bad times.

The Days seem to have retired from the fore-front of Leicestershire sport, but in the days of the 'steeple-race' they must have been devoted to horse, hound and gun; for the name

of the then representative of the old Wymondham family occurs over and over again in the notes; for instance, 'Must tell Webster to get my flints from Brandon, Day's gun hardly ever misses fire, and I got beaten by Jemmy Toon at the Pastures through mine missing. I believe Webster can't chip a flint, or perhaps our Leicestershire flints aren't so good as the Norfolk sort.'

From another entry it appears that the old boy tackled Day in a match wherein he rode Buckram against Day's Badger, from Saxby Turn round Twyford Wood and back. This would be Twyford by Buckminster, not Twyford near Burrough; and the remarkable part of the match was, that though neither was disqualified, neither won.

From what I read in the notes on the above-mentioned 'steeple-race,' and in several other entries, this Day must have ridden with more courage than judgment. There were no flags to mark the course, and he chose to take the deep lane close to Coston, where the drop is well nigh suicidal, his object being to save about a quarter of a mile; but horse and man lay a confused heap when the leap had been taken, and though he recovered, he had a bad month of it. 'Day must have nine lives,' is the closing remark in the entry. I hope the remark was not prompted by a wish that Day had broken his neck.

Meanwhile, my grandfather, it appears, veered to the left, and was no doubt sailing gaily along over the grass lands at the back of Buckminster village, when Buckram put his fore leg in a surface drain and broke it; Buckram had to be shot, and the stakes were drawn. 'Bad job losing old Buckram, but we'll have another go at Day yet.' Looking further to find a fulfilment of this threat, I find it in a different department of sport, viz. cocking. Whether it was his own property, or that of a man named Wright, probably an ancestor of 'old Cocker,' is uncertain, but my grandfather backed it, and Wright fought it. This Thorpe cock was a black-breasted red, and the Wymondham sportsman had a fancy for duck-wings, which were then evidently a rather despised variety; but the duck-wing won the battle, leaving our cock dead on the area, but strange to relate, the latter killed himself in a rally, by striking his spurs through his own head, instead of his antagonist's. This Day got the best of it on that occasion, but the defeated sportsman threw the blame on Wright for binding the spurs on the wrong way. If this were so, and my supposition that he was an ancestor of 'Cocker' be

correct, the family must have improved wonderfully during the early part of the present century, for Cocker to be able to do such good work for Sir Harry Goodriche. Probably the same Wright combined the profession of dog-breaking with that of handling cocks, for there is a memorandum of an agreement with one Hugh Wright, whereby the latter agrees to keep and break, true to feather, a setter bitch called Dash, for the sum of ten shillings down, and three guineas on delivery of the bitch, and a satisfactory field trial. Considering the greater value of money in those days, Wright was well paid, inasmuch as I have known Owen Hill undertake the task for about that sum, some twenty years ago; and he does not seem to have done his work too well, for under date 1804, we find, 'Dash owned to a hare in the Oatleas.—Serve me right for not breaking her myself.'

There is a pathetic reminiscence of a foxhound called Bolter, which the old yeoman had walked, and which was bred from a stallion hound of a Colonel Thornton's, whoever he might be. This hound was entered some time before Meynell left Quorn, as it was on his recommendation that the strain was adopted. They were drawing a gorse near Saltby—most likely Stonesby Gorse—and Bolter alone, of all the pack, owned to scent. As none of the others took the slightest notice, the first whip, who had always been prejudiced against the introduction of this new blood, first rated, and eventually thonged her most unmercifully, so much so, that (of course accidentally) he cut out one of her eyes. But nevertheless, she got on the line of a fox which had broken in the direction of Grantham. The other hounds at last got a faint scent, and went after her, but the delay had made it very catching, and they would never have come up with Bolter, nor killed their fox, but for the help of a Skillington farmer, who told them their fox was far ahead, and a hound with an eye hanging out of its socket close after him. He gave them the direction, and by and by they viewed Bolter, which enabled them to get on terms with their quarry. They killed him, but my grandfather seemed fearfully grieved at the affair, and indignant at the careless conduct of Burroughs (the whip). This was probably an instance of exceptional merit in an individual hound, for there is no record or tradition of this blood having been beneficial to the pack. Farmers who walk puppies get very much attached to them, and there are various reminiscences of hounds brought up on the old farm, but, with one exception, they are not so uncommon as to be worthy of special mention.

The name is half obliterated by time, but at a guess it was Riotous, and he was the only hound on record in our parts that ever ran a fox from start to finish, and killed 'single-handed.' This happened through his sneaking down a hedge-row outside Freeby Wood, unbeknown to the whips, and getting on an out-lying one, which he chased across the valley, over Buckminster Park, with no check at Newman's Gorse, or any of the other coverts. All fair 'racing and chasing,' till with a veer to the left, and the mask towards Ponton, the hound brought his fox to book about where the Great Northern Railway now runs. What a feast that hound must have had all to himself! There wasn't much left, when a Corby shepherd discovered him at his revels and took him home to the castle, where he (the shepherd) not only received a handsome guerdon, but sampled Robert de Todenei so thoroughly, that they had to give him a 'shake-down,' and send him back next morning.

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.

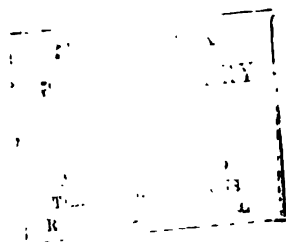


UITE up to date, and treated with his well-known power of originality, is the new Series of Steeple-chasing Subjects from the pencil of John Beer. Disregarding all that has gone before, he has approached the illustration of this increasingly popular sport from a standpoint peculiarly his own, and with a freshness of style and brilliancy of colouring that will commend itself to devotees of Steeplechasing. The first plate depicts the field in various positions, warming up their mounts at a fence preliminary to the race itself. In the second they are well away, and some are topping the first fence with all the 'go' of perfect vigour. In the third is represented the water jump. One is negotiating it in good style, a riderless horse is apparently doing the same, while another is floundering in the middle with his jockey clinging to his neck in his determination not to part company. 'The Last Hurdle' completes the set of four, and in the foreground three have separated themselves from the field and are setting-to in real earnest in the straight run home.

Gunners generally and tyros in particular, will cordially welcome the last work upon the subject of shooting from the pen



Single Handed



of Sir Ralph Payne-Gallwey, Bart., entitled, *Letters to Young Shooters*. This is the second series, addressed chiefly to budding sportsmen, and not only treats of the production and preservation of game, but of that which for the moment is of more importance to the beginner, viz., killing the same in a workmanlike and scientific manner. Of equal, not to say greater importance to the young shooter, are the notes on breaking dogs for the gun, and the lucid and unmistakably plain manner of imparting the information without circumlocution or padding will commend itself to most readers. As a modern shooter, the author is distinctly in favour of driving game, and has many arguments in proof of its superiority, but, notwithstanding, many of the Old School will still maintain their *penchant* for 'A good walk with a brace of steady pointers or well-broken setters.' As usual there is much to be said for both systems. The pages on 'Pheasant Rearing' together with 'Advice in Selecting an Estate for Game Preservation, are eminently practical, and will interest old quite as well as young shooters, if not more so. There are over one hundred admirable illustrations from the pencil of the author, which elucidate the text.—Longmans, Green & Co., are the publishers.

The Breechloader and How to use it, by W. W. Greener (Cassell & Co.), is another copiously illustrated book that will appeal to shooting men, and all the more so, as it is written by an acknowledged master of the subject. After giving the history and varieties of the shot gun, he plunges at once into the practical business of the choice and fit of the weapon, with instructions for handling, cleaning, and putting the same together, with many other useful items of advice that should be carefully noted by all save expert gunners.

George Routledge & Sons publish a 'Story of a Derby' by Finch Mason, entitled, *Frank Maitland's Luck*. It is written in his usual crisp and breezy style, commencing with the disownment of Frank Maitland by his father, in consequence of his declining to marry a lady provided for him by that morose and determined relative, and after passing through many vicissitudes and adventures, wins a large sum of money by backing the Derby winner, but the complications and plotting must be read to be appreciated.

Horsemen will do well to note certain sporting goods recently introduced by W. L. Orpwood, Saddler, of Oxford. Amongst others is a *Fetlock Boot* suggested by J. B. Leigh, Esq. The top of the boot is a combination of sponge and elastic, which has a clinging tendency, even if the boot is buckled on loosely. The advantages claimed for it are: the prevention of mud getting down, also ringing the leg, while the side piece receives the blow without turning round. The *Non-slipping Riding and Driving Reins* is a suggestion of Major A. T. Fisher, to prevent the annoyance of reins sliding through the fingers in wet or frosty weather. The leather is thin and supple, with invisible stops in hand pieces. 'Humane' Bits, both Curb and Snaffle, for pulling horses, are also amongst the inventions of this enterprising firm.

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RACING.

Plate 1.—EPSOM: THE PADDOCK.
 „ 2.—SANDOWN: THE PRELIMINARY CANTER.
 „ 3.—DONCASTER: AT THE POST.
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LONDON: Published by MESSRS. FORES, 41 PICCADILLY, W.

FORES'S NEW SPORTING PUBLICATIONS.

→* RACING *←

From the original paintings by A. C. HAVELL.

PLATE I.

EPSOM.—INSPECTING THE COMPETITORS.

PLATE II.

SANDOWN.—PREPARING TO START.

PLATE III.

KEMPTON.—THE PARADE.

PLATE IV.

NEWMARKET.—WAITING for the VERDICT.

Size of each Plate, 23 x 14 inches. Price £4 4s. the Set of Four.

'Exceedingly cheerful and full of racing character are the new series of four coloured prints, representing the different phases of the "Sport of Kings," recently issued by Messrs. Fores, Piccadilly. They are from the pencil of Mr. A. C. Havell, and fully maintain his well-earned reputation as a spirited delineator of sporting subjects. Plate I represents an assemblage of ladies and gentlemen in the paddock at Epsom, "Inspecting the Competitors," the central figure being Ormonde, with Archer up. The scene is gay, bright, and as full of sunshine as was the last Derby Day. The next plate transports the spectator to Sandown, where the horses are "Preparing to Start," the most prominent being Ayrshire, with F. Barrett up. Plate 3 shows the Grand Stand at Kempton, and "The Parade" for the Jubilee Stakes, with that grand horse Bendigo in the foreground, bestridden by J. Watts. The Birdcage at Newmarket completes the set of four, and here is to be seen Prince Soltykoff's Sheen "Waiting for the Verdict" after having won the Cesarewitch.'

Sporting Notes.

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A FOXHUNTER'S DREAM.

From the Original by A. C. HAVELL.

'Represents a sportsman comfortably ensconced in an easy-chair, with slippers on fender, in front of a fire, sleeping after (presumably) a hard day, followed by a sufficing dinner, and in his perturbed dreaming topsy-turvy incidents of the Chase are supposed to be present to his mind's eye, and are very evident to the natural optics of the beholder, as seen through the parted wreaths of smoke proceeding from the fireplace. Thus in one glimpse we see a desperately distressed sportsman pursued by a pack of foxes, and in another a Foxhound in like evil case—then foxes making it particularly lively for a flying Earthstopper; while, again, scarlet-coated foxes, mounted on foxhounds, are seen going full cry over fences or through water after their human quarry. A Hunt Breakfast is also portrayed, the partakers of which are again foxes in 'pink,' obsequiously waited upon by fox-terriers. Immediately round and about the weary slumberer are more foxes in Hunting Costume, some jeering and some toasting the passive sportsman, whilst others are playing tricks with his hunting apparel—notably, one astride his Hunting Cap, to which is harnessed a couple of hounds, which he is driving tandem; nor from the feverish vision of the victim is omitted the ballroom, the opera, and other places, where invariably Mr. and Mrs. Fox take the lead; whilst Mephistophelean diablerie is also strongly in evidence.'—*Sporting Notes.*

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From the Original by A. C. HAVELL.

'The latest sporting publication which has emanated from the gallery of Messrs. Fores is entitled *A Racing Nightmare*, from the pencil of A. C. Havell, and forms a worthy pendant to his popular *Foxhunter's Dream*, being equally replete with humour of the topsy-turvy character, and, like most dreams, is considerably mixed with the usual amount of incongruity, the whole forming an elaborate and mirth-provoking joke. Commencing at the bottom right-hand corner we see a sleeper in a most uncomfortable position; he is probably a jockey, mayhap a trainer—at any rate, by his surroundings, evidently a racing man, and the cause of his perturbed slumbers may have arisen from having experienced a "bad time" or a good dinner imperfectly digested; but, no matter, the result is decidedly amusing—at least, to the spectator, who may enjoy, according to his power of humorous appreciation, the pictorial effects portrayed. Upon the slumberer, with fore feet planted on his chest, and gazing at him with flashing eyes, is a black horse or (more likely) mare, while around his couch proceed such fantastic incidents as a jockey riding on his towel-horse, steeplechasing over and into his ready-filled tub, pony racing with monkeys up, and an imp ringing a saddling-bell attached to the head-rail of his bed; above these are to be seen ghostly riders on a moor, with frightened touts making off with all haste; then right across the picture is represented a gigantic race, in which are depicted some of the principal owners in their own colours, jockies' faces being traced in the horses' heads. It is impossible here to notice more than a few of the foreground figures, such as H.R.H., the Dukes of Westminster, Portland, and Beaufort, with suggestions of Barrett, Archer, Watts, and Cannon; above this are "welshing" and "nobbling" incidents, and a "strong man" scene on the course, in which an athletic jockey is balancing a horse; but exceedingly crisp and delightful, and a charming picture in itself, is a field of some dozen horses bestridden by lady riders in most effective racing costumes, who are making life a burden to an unfortunate starter vainly endeavouring to get them into line. A thimble-rigging incident leads us finally to the apotheosis of racing, shown by a crowd of jockies prostrate in adoration of a golden horse.'—*Sporting Notes.*

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4. WAKING UP.

5. THE OLDEN TIME.

6. THE NIGHT TEAM.

The first five plates (size, $12 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ inches), £2 12s. 6d.

FORES'S COACHINGS. After J. W. Shayer.

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3. FLOODED.

5. IN TIME FOR THE COACH.

2. STUCK FAST.

4. THE ROAD v. THE RAIL.

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3. SWISHING A RASPER.
5. CHARGING AN OX-FENCE.
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2. A STRANGE COUNTRY.
5. A RARE SORT FOR THE DOWNS.
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6. THOROUGH-BRED MARE AND FOAL.
3. DUCK AND DUCKLINGS.
7. DRAUGHT MARE AND FOAL.
4. HEN AND CHICKENS.
8. COW AND CALF.
9. HUNTING MARE AND FOAL.

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Sheets 2, 3, 4, form a consecutive series of Twelve Hunting Incidents.

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After H. ALKEN.

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Represents a string of unbroken colts plunging with excitement as for the first time they fall in with hounds.

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FOR 1000 SOVEREIGNS.

Between Mr. Geo. Osbaldeston on his 'Clasher,' and Dick Christian on Capt. Ross's 'Clinker.' From Great Dalby Windmill to within a mile of Tilton-on-the-Hill. The five miles were done in 16 minutes.

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A large Dog which has been stolen, having broken the rope which held him (a part being still round his neck), regains the door of his old home, and waits eagerly and anxiously on the doorstep in pelting rain for admittance. Coloured, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ by 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches, £1 5s. Plain, 10s. 6d.

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LA DIABLE EST MORT. After Percy Macquoid. Fowls about to approach a fox who is shamming dead.

INNOCENTS ABROAD. After J. C. Dollman. Goslings meeting a bull-dog on a narrow bridge.

OUT FOR A SCAMPER. After F. Cecil Boulton. Pack of Hounds rushing out of kennel-door.

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